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LETTERS

OF

MARTHA SMITH,

WITH A

SHORT MEMOIR OF HER LIFE.

PREPARED AND PUBLISHED BY A FEW OF
HER PARTICULAR FRIENDS.

NEW-YORK.

PIERCY AND REED, PRINTERS.

No. 9 Spruce-street.

1844.

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MARTIN SMITH



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SHORT MEMOIR OF

THE LIFE OF MARTIN SMITH

BY MARTIN SMITH

NEW YORK

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

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TO THE READER.

IN assuming the task of making selections from the letters of MARTHA SMITH, and arranging and preparing them for the press, we were in some degree aware of the difficulty of the undertaking, and not unmindful of the responsibility that would rest upon us. We would willingly have been excused from the service, and have confided it to more experienced hands; but the lot seemed to fall upon us; and being convinced, from a perusal of her letters, that there was much matter in them too valuable to be lost, or limited even to her family and intimate friends, we were made willing to submit to the undertaking.

It will be seen that a large number of her letters were written to her family at home, whilst engaged in religious visits to various parts of the country. These were in many instances almost exclusively made up of directions about domestic concerns, and narrative of her journeyings—remarks about the country, people and things she saw, intended for the entertainment of her family; and however interesting and instructive they might have been to them, it is not believed they would be so to the general reader.

Thus much it seemed proper to say, to account for

the numerous brief extracts which will be found interspersed through the volume.

Many of the letters to her brother were written during the excitement and controversy which existed in the Society of Friends, previous to the separation in that body. In these, frequent allusion was made to the then existing state of things, which would not now be either interesting or instructive. It was therefore thought best, not unnecessarily to contribute to the revival of the excited feelings which grew out of that unhappy contest, by giving those allusions a permanent form. There were, nevertheless, some statements and observations relating to that controversy, which it was deemed expedient to retain, in order that the reader might be made more fully acquainted with her character and peculiar position at that period. There is, also, a considerable quantity of remark and observation upon other topics, not in themselves of any importance to the public, but being intimately connected with sentiments and precepts of general utility and application, from which they could not be separated without injury to the sense, they have therefore been inserted.

It may not be improper also here to remark, that as those letters were written in the confidence of friendship, or the affections of propinquity, without the slightest view to their ever being made public, they have not been composed, generally, with that strict regard to diction and accuracy which might have been given them; and although some slight alterations and cor-

rections have been made in their style and language, not affecting the sense, it was thought best to let them appear as nearly in their original state as would be proper. Yet, notwithstanding those defects, there will be found amongst them specimens of simple, yet beautiful and forcible eloquence, which manifest no ordinary talent for composition.

It has been our aim to embody in this work, through the medium of her own sentiments and actions as many of the traits and features of her general character as lay within our reach, without trespassing upon the private and domestic relations of life; believing that all which has emanated from her with reference to the general interest and benefit of society, will be found useful, practical, and worthy the deepest attention.

We have thus honestly, and to the best of our ability, acquitted ourselves of the charge committed to us; and should it be found that the selection has not been made as judiciously as it might have been; that any thing has been included which ought not to have met the public eye; inexperience in such matters, and a strong personal attachment for the writer, must plead our excuse.

THE EDITORS.

Solebury, 9th mo. 2, 1843.

MEMOIR.

MARTHA SMITH, the writer of these Letters, was born the 8th of Second month, 1787. She was the daughter of Josiah and Deborah Brown, of Plumstead, Bucks county, Pennsylvania, members of the Society of Friends.

When young, she possessed a lively imagination, tempered with a serious, thoughtful turn of mind, of which the early productions of her pen, in an epistolary correspondence with her young friends, give abundant evidence, although her opportunities of acquiring school learning had been rather limited. One striking characteristic of her mind, which was early developed, was her love for the real and substantial, in preference to the fictitious and frivolous.

She grew up to maturity amongst her contemporaries, and mingled with them in their juvenile sports and entertainments, with the ordinary alacrity of her age, but was rather a follower than a leader in the gay circles of mirth. Her taciturn and meditative disposition somewhat disqualified her for the companion of levity, and made it apparent that hilarity was not her conge-

nial element. She imbibed, during her youthful age, a taste for reading and literature, and a quick relish for poetry, particularly that of a moral and sentimental character; and Young, Cowper, and Milton, were her favorite authors. As she advanced further in life, however, those early appetites and habits subsided, and her mind seemed busy with other objects. She was then, most likely, receiving and fostering the germs of those deep and sublime views and sentiments of the purity and perfection of the Christian character, which in due time were proclaimed in the exercise of her public ministry.

She appeared in public testimony in the meetings of Friends about the year 1819 and received encouragement to proceed in that line, when duty required; but her mind expanding beyond the boundaries set by those who were appointed judges in that matter, she was not acknowledged a minister until the separation of the Society; soon after which, she was recommended, and remained an approved minister until her death, a period of about thirteen years; during which time, she travelled much in the middle and western States, for the promotion of truth and righteousness on the earth, which she was frequently enabled to advocate in a lucid and unsophisticated manner, to the edification of many minds; being free from an affected solemnity of tone or manner. Most especially was the example of practical righteousness, which shone forth in her

private character, worthy of commemoration. In her family and neighborhood, she was a faithful and self-sacrificing friend, a pattern of industry and economy—not in order to lay up treasures on earth, but that she might thereby be enabled to devote more time to the exercise of her mind, the improvement of which she always considered vastly paramount in importance to any thing pertaining to this world's treasures, from the love of which she appeared to be very much redeemed; regarding them altogether as a means, and not as an end.

Testimonies to the usefulness of her public labors might be multiplied to a great extent, were it thought expedient to swell this volume with the opinions of others; but it is believed that the straightforward truthfulness of her letters will be a sufficient guarantee for her honesty and integrity of purpose, where she was imperfectly known; and where she was well known, such evidence would seem superfluous. We cannot, however, avoid the conviction that it would be best to introduce here an extract or two from a letter received since her death, from a friend in Adams county, in this State, dated York Springs, Third month 26, 1843.

“After she had been in our place, on her way home from Indiana and Ohio, I felt it was her due to bear testimony to her excellent service in our parts. I was at several meetings with her. When I heard she was no more among us in

body, regret stole across my soul that I had not given her this 'cup of cold water,' in testimony of that power which sent her forth the herald of peace to a fallen world. Her testimony reached the witness in many minds, arousing the indolent, and pointing the way of return to the father's house to those who were spending their time in riotous living. But like the Saviour of men, her testimony was most severe to those who cloaked their unrighteousness with the profession of religion; and many therein saw the evidence of her being guided by that power which alone can support us in wrestling with 'principalities and powers, with spiritual wickedness in high places,' as well as low; and though like the apostle, she many times found that no one stood with her, she evidently felt that His grace was sufficient for her; and I doubt not but children yet unborn will arise and call her blessed.

"In the Yearly-meeting of Philadelphia, a few years since, I heard her say, she regarded the progress of truth in the world, or the establishment of the church of Christ, to be represented by the building of a temple. Not only were different materials needed, but there were different labors to perform;—some must fell the timber, some must score it, and some use the smoothing plane. It seemed to be her lot to use the scoring axe; and though the labor was hard, and some saw not the need of its use, she believed, as all looked unto God for help, His glory would be more manifest in the establishment of

His kingdom in the earth. I comprehended the idea, for I had before seen that the adventurous, firm spirit of a Luther, was as necessary for the advancement of the work of reformation, as the mild eloquence of a Melancthon; and the unyielding temper and keen rebuke of a Fox, as the deep persuasive tone of a Pennington or a Penn.

"I have waited in constant expectation to see your Monthly meeting prepare a testimony respecting her; for though the truth she advocated can never die, and her devoted perseverance and unconquered faith still shine, yet to give them a tongue were wise in man."

Towards the close of her life she was very much enlarged in the ministry, in the exercise of which, the developement of her mind was such as frequently to astonish her familiar friends. She was a zealous coadjutor with the laborers in the various moral enterprises for the improvement of the human family, viz: Temperance, Anti-Slavery, &c.; frequently advocating the same as occasion seemed to demand, in the meetings of Friends; believing, as she frequently expressed, that man's love to his Creator is best tested by love to the creatures of his power.

She was remarkably free from the shackles of sectarianism, having come into that glorious liberty, wherein she was enabled to see good wherever the Divine hand could be traced, having learned that that which God has cleansed should

not by his children be considered common or unclean, or too unholy for them to mingle with, for the promotion of any good cause whereby she believed the human family might be benefitted. Her faith rested not on works, but her works on faith.

On her return from a visit to Indiana Yearly meeting, in the winter of 1840, she appeared to be laboring under a pulmonary affection ; but the ardor of her zeal being in no wise abated, she continued active until the following autumn, when the disease had made such ravages on her system that she was mostly confined at home, yet still evincing a lively interest in those subjects that had previously occupied her mind.

About this time she had to pass through an afflictive dispensation, in the loss of her youngest child, a promising daughter of thirteen. Her feelings on this occasion are expressed in a few lines of poetry, written by herself at that time :

Third-day morning, 11th mo. 4, 1840.

Another morning dawns in beauty bright,
While yet she lingers in this world of care ;
A lovely daughter, for whose early blight,
Sadly, and oft, will fall the dimming tear.

Her playful innocence, her child-like glee,
Her genius too, not of inferior mould,
Have left their traces on each memory,
That, day by day, its treasures will unfold.

Second-day, 23d.

The bourne is past, her sufferings at an end,
Her limbs are shrouded in the peaceful clay ;

Her ashes with a sister's ashes blend,
As side by side their precious relics lay.

* * * * *

Is it a blight? a scion taken hence.
Engrafted by the potent hand of love
Into the vine that grows in Paradise,
And weaves its branches round the courts above.

Nay, nay, my soul, rather rejoice to know,
This bud shall flourish there, and there shall bloom
Unnipp'd by frosts that wither here below,
Or blighted by the dampness of the tomb.

After this event, her strength continued gradually to decline, though her mind was preserved calm and cheerful, becoming one who has a well grounded hope of a blissful immortality.

A short time previous to her death, a female friend who had travelled with her on several religious visits to distant places, visited her. During the time she was with her, Martha said to her, "I feel it right to impress on thy mind the very great importance of attending to every duty that is clearly manifested to thee, though it may be greatly in the cross to thy natural will, and there may seem to be mountains of difficulty in the way, yet if we attend simply to the dictates of truth, these duties will become pleasant to us. I think thou hast known something of this in thy own experience; it is the true principle of Friends; but there is so much looking to our friends, and fearing this or the other will not be in accordance with the Discipline, or with the

views of our friends, that I think there are but few who fully practice simple obedience to the manifested will of our Heavenly Father, which is of more importance to us than every other consideration.

“ I now think it right to mention to thee some of my past experience. When my dear mother lay very helpless, and I had been nursing her some time, I believed it was my duty to leave her, and attend to other duties, which were very clearly pointed out to me ; but my best friends could not see and feel with me ; they thought it improper, and I believe, irrational, for me to leave my helpless mother and my family at that time. It was very trying to my natural will, but I believed my peace of mind depended thereon, and in that belief, I was strengthened to leave all and go. I believe it was more in the cross than I ever left home before. I met with many outward trials, and my stay from home was prolonged, because I could not appoint any meetings ; therefore I was obliged to wait until meeting-day, to attend the meetings I thought it right to visit. I think the performance of that journey, and the devotedness to what I believed was right, added more to my spiritual life than any one visit I ever performed ; and I can now recur to it with peace of mind.”

The day before her death, it was the privilege of the writer of this to be with her, who can testify, that in her case the words of the poet were fully realized, when he says :

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged, beyond the common walks
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of Heaven.”

To be with her was like being in the borders of the spirit-land, and holding sweet converse with its celestial inhabitants; while the world, with all its allurements, receded like the phantom of a dream. She did not appear to have any sense of her approaching dissolution, although her weakness was extreme, and every symptom indicated that it was at hand. Indeed, so strong was the spirit of life in her, that death, in every sense of the word, might be said to be swallowed up therein. The breathing of her soul was one continuous strain of love, thanksgiving and praise, though in broken accents. Light, too, beamed on her understanding, at that solemn crisis, on the most interesting of all subjects, as will appear from her own expressions, which were committed to writing at the time.

She said to one of her particular friends, in reference to the subjects which had divided the Society of Friends: “We have quarreled about the blood, we have quarreled about the man, we have quarreled about the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ, but what have we to do with these things? Let us consider the man as the mere garment clothing the Divinity, that fulness of the Godhead that dwelt in him. It was the Father’s purpose, his eternal purpose, to send him to the world of mankind, clothed with all the feelings of a man, that overcoming these,

he might be a perfect example to mankind; that, by following him, by the aid of his spirit, they might also overcome even the world, with all its temptations, its riches, its glories, and its grandeur; the flesh, with all its inordinate propensities; the devil, or deceiver of man's peace and happiness, which I conceive to be the carnal mind, with all its twistings and entwinings, its insinuations and false pretensions of things, delusive reasonings, doubting and questionings why these things should be so."

After a short pause, in which the breathing of her spirit, which was partly audible, though in very low and faltering accents, was thanksgiving and praise, she added, "How I would like my friends at Buckingham to know this, this day, (it being meeting day;) but I must wait in patience; he that opened it to me, can open it to them."

A friend called to see her, on his way to meeting, and when about to take leave of her, on being told where he was going, she said, "Go, and be faithful, and don't fear the face of man." She then desired reading. when several chapters of the New Testament were read to her, in which she evinced a lively interest, making short remarks, as—"How plain!" "How wonderful!" She manifested a concern that those in attendance on her should be spared all unnecessary labor, and observed that she made a great deal of work. On being told that no one thought so, she replied, "We are often under a great mistake about this; we have a testimony to bear

against oppression, and we have no more right to oppress ourselves than others. These bodies are designed to be temples of the living God, given to us for a glorious purpose, to work out the salvation of the immortal part."

Some friends of the other division of our Society, coming to see her, she manifested much affection for them, and said she knew no difference, and never had, between their friends and ours; said those she could approach, and who could sympathise with her, felt equally near to her. One of the friends observing she believed Martha had many friends, she replied, "I do not think I have a personal enemy on earth."

The reading was continued, by her request, at intervals during the day. Towards evening, two of her brothers came to her bedside. She told them she was very weak in body, adding, "but O, how strong in spirit! O, what a glorious day this has been to me! What joy of heart! Wonderful! wonderful!"

In the early part of the evening, a friend of the Orthodox part of the Society called to see her. She appeared very glad to see him, and observed to him, "We are all one in Christ;" and spoke of the necessity of the reduction of the human will, and of the free-agency of man, in that he had the power to choose his own course. She spoke to him of one at whose hands she had received what some deemed harsh treatment, saying, "He had been to me as a tender father; he took me by the hand, and led me along,

encouraged me and gave me counsel, until he thought I had become a spoiled child, and refractory, and what could he do? He could not see with me;—he had his work and I had mine, and I never blamed him.

To one of her friends who had spent the day with her, she said, “Thou must feel the right time to come again, and not wait to be sent for. If we were attentive, we should know the right time so pay a common visit. To a friend who was about to take leave of her, in the evening, and who was going to Philadelphia next morning, she said, “Tell my friends there, that I am very weak in body, but strong in the Lord.”

In the night she awoke, and said she had had a sweet and refreshing sleep. She then asked a friend who was sitting by her, if she had been to see a young woman, whom she called by name, and who had been testified against by the Monthly-meeting. The friend replied, she had not visited her, neither had she seen her since she was disunited from Friends. She said, “I have visited her, and felt great satisfaction in a little sitting I had with her and the family. But how remiss we of the Society of Friends are, in this respect. Those who have transgressed, are equally the subjects of God’s care, and ought to be the objects of our care. I have often thought how hard it was for those who had strayed from the right path, though they may have become sensible of their error, and humbly acknowledged

it, yet, unless the hand of encouragement was held out to them, it is very hard for them to rise again." She said she felt no distinction in the human family; and it was evident she made no distinction, but encouraged all to endeavor to attain to what she so fully realized—that peace of mind which is the reward of obedience.

Early in the morning she wished to have the window curtains raised, that she might see the light. She then said, "The Lord said 'Let there be light,' and there was light, and how beautiful it is." She requested a friend who was sitting by her to read in the New Testament. She was asked if she had any choice in what part of the book was read. She said, "No, not any; it is all instructive to me." During the morning she sent for two of their workmen, conversed with them in a friendly and familiar manner, and advised them to attend meeting, and relinquish their present habits of drinking. One of them states that he was much affected with what she said, and thinks it likely he should still have continued in the habit of drinking, had she not thus admonished him.

About two o'clock, nature had a hard struggle with the disease, the latter gaining the victory. She continued to sink gradually until about midnight, when she passed quietly away, like one falling into a sweet sleep, on the 22d of Second month, 1841.

The following lines were found among her papers in her own hand-writing, and are believed to have been composed by her a few weeks previous to her death. They afford an additional evidence of her well-grounded hope of a blissful immortality.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

I go to where the rose's bloom perfumes the ambient air,
To where the lily's sweet perfume is scented every where ;
I go to where the native choir of woodland songsters raise,
In concert with celestial lyre, eternal songs of praise.
I go to where the flowers of spring, and fruits of summer bloom,
And mellow autumn's richest tinge, ne'er fades in winter's gloom ;
To where the streams of Paradise, in chrystal currents flow
Through spicy groves, and verdant meads, where rests the heavenly dew.

I go to where our blessed Lord is gone, and will provide
A place for those who hear his word, and in his faith abide.
I go to where the saints have gone, who walked in holy light,
And through the mercies of our God, received their robes of white.
Then come, thou messenger of peace, and set the prisoner free ;
From mortal bonds the soul release, to dwell on high with thee.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Buckingham, 6th mo. 9, 1816.

DEAR AUNT:

My long silence must not be attributed to indifference, or insensibility to the favor of thy letter of 4th mo., 1815, but rather to a want of ability or opportunity. I must acknowledge that I feel too poor to make any reply to the wholesome advice contained in the fore part thereof. May I patiently endure that poverty, is the desire of my heart. I could indeed feel for the bereaved family of Grace Taylor, but at this distant period I well remember it was to me a time of renewed proof of the great necessity there is for us to have our affections weaned from this world and its treasures, an attainment I have often longed for, and often endeavored to seek after, since I have been a mother; believing it to be the only way to enjoy true happiness here, or to pursue the path to that hereafter. I think I have clearly seen, it is not in the abundance of riches alone that a worldly spirit consists, but that the "trafficker in hundreds may be as deeply buried as the

trafficker in thousands, unless the eye be kept single."

Ah! how often have I almost trembled, for fear a husband or children should prove the right eye or the right hand, that should be required to be parted with. Could I experience this naturally strong will to be totally slain on the cross, oh! how many mountains of difficulty would be removed; but may I never let go the faith I humbly own I have long had, and still have, in the good providence of an all-seeing God. * * *

M. S.

LETTER II.

Solebury, 11th mo. 2, 1817.

DEAR AUNT:

* * * * * Thee asks me if ever I think of cousin J. W., which I often do, and had done before. But what can I say? The account thee gives me is short, but agreeable; I had heard something of the change before; I had even had a very favorable account of him from aunt E. Ellicott. Dear youth! methinks all that is living within me craves his preservation. Is not this somewhat fulfilling the Scriptures, in "those being called in from the highways," seeing how many that have had the advantages of education and society, are floating, as it were, on the ocean of life, tossed by every wind, without the least ballast, or principle of gravity, to steady their barks!

But this, with many others of the like, and even more striking instances of the influence of divine grace, afford the animated hope that the blessed testimony of Truth will never be permitted to fall, however it may be slighted or trampled upon by professors and the children of professors. Dear aunt, we yesterday attended the funeral of that venerable father in the church, Oliver Paxson, perhaps as true a model of primitive purity as hath belonged to the Society since the days of its founder. He had been laboring under severe indisposition for many months, but unexpectedly revived some weeks since, so as to get out to meeting. The concourse that attended him to the grave was large, though the day was very unfavorable. He was interred at Solebury, where a solid meeting was held, and a lively testimony borne by Edward Hicks ; also short ones by William Taylor and Mercy Phillips.

Dr. John Watson is also deceased. He was buried at Buckingham the 25th of 10th month. Thus in one week have two eminent members of our Society been called away—a loud summons to careless survivors to double their diligence. Give my love to all my dear relatives, joined by Charles Smith ; and to uncle T. W. in particular—has he forgotten me ?

With unaltered affection, I now bid farewell.

M. S.

LETTER III.

Solebury, 8th mo. 29, 1818.

DEAR UNCLE :

Once more I am going to address thee, though I feel it will require extraordinary exertions to accomplish it. Thy kind letter of 6th month last demands that exertion ; but I can say nothing to its contents—nothing to the subject hinted at in a former one of mine, (only to desire that it may rest a profound secret with yourselves.) My situation of mind, since the various provings I have undergone, and have yet to undergo, I have no ability nor inclination to describe. I can only faintly implore that I may never shrink from the chastening rod, or my faith fail in any degree.

How have I admired the wonderful goodness of the Most High, that is so beautifully described by the prophet, in speaking of the love of Christ to his church—"I will allure her, and draw her into the wilderness, and there I will speak comfortably unto her." Oh ! what comprehensive mercy, to allure poor erring mortals with the sunshine of his countenance, till they are almost imperceptibly drawn into a situation, the gloom and dreariness of which, his voice only can dispel. Nor is that goodness less conspicuous in his manner of opening the seals, as described by John the Divine, which I take to be an exact type of the progressive state the mind is to pass through, till it arrives to a thorough knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom. How could

mortal endure a situation comparable to that revealed in the opening of the sixth seal, if our peace was not previously taken from the earth, if any thing of an earthly nature could possibly yield consolation to the tried, bewildered soul. But blessed is the name of Israel's God, he has wisely planned it otherwise. Dear friends, do ye not tremble for me. I trust I have often felt, and now feel, the glorious, inestimable privilege of being taught in the school of Christ; of being permitted to behold the mysteries of His kingdom; and on Him alone, from whom I derive all my strength, all my true comfort, I rely for preservation.

There is a state of poverty to be endured, which to the inexperienced traveller is very trying; but there is a state which I often realise, that I have no words to describe, but, as I have sometimes mentally termed it, of not feeling at all; a situation in which I have believed the greatest watchfulness necessary. Perhaps it was something similar to this our Lord alluded to, when he declared the miserable situation of the unwatchful servant—Matthew, chap. xxiv., verse 48 to the end. But in what is it not essentially necessary to follow the directions of the master to his immediate disciples, and consequently to every professing Christian, to “watch and pray continually;” his command to them also being—“Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath day;” which two seasons to me represent the different states of the most chilling

of all poverty, and that of a degree of rest in the sunshine of an approving conscience—the last of which, I believe, of all others I most fear to trust myself in.

I have very unexpectedly run this letter so far, but I believe I may yet add a little of the almost daily travail of my spirit, on account of the many wrong things among us as a society; which I think I see is owing to a disregard of small things, more than to any very flagrant deviations, till they have become so numerous and so great that I have been ready to conclude there must be almost as great a reformation before we become what we profess to be, as there was in George Fox's day.

My very soul has been grieved in beholding, even among the foremost ranks in Society, the apparent indulgences of a carnal appetite. The lightness and gaiety of youth I consider less blameable than the luxury and excess (for nothing less it appears to me) of the older part of Society.

What claim can we have to the reward of self-denial, while we live according to the "lusts of the flesh,"—"the lust of the eye, or the pride of life?" What consistency is there in a plain garment made of the finest materials, the furniture of our houses exactly to suit the taste; but more than these, the great extreme in the provision of the table, not to mention the expense, the great waste of time in preparing it—time that might be employed to a much more profitable purpose.

These may be called small things, but I con-

sider them great things when they become, as it were, an object of pursuit to the mind. Again, they are great things when we look to the influence of example on mankind, and especially on the middle and lower classes, who, aspiring to an equality in appearance with others, are far from living within the bounds of their circumstances; hence the breach of a very essential part of our discipline. Again, they are great things as they relate to our dear children, whose tender minds I conceive to be in danger of becoming intoxicated with the love of them, even in infancy; and from seeds thus sown, what fruit can we expect but lightness and vanity, unless an Omnipotent arm is made bare for a deliverance.

I know not why I have written thus to you, but I simply leave it. If you are tried in any of the before-mentioned points, oh! that the hands of your arms may be made strong in resisting the temptation of the enemy.

It being near meeting time on First-day morning, I conclude with just saying I have no cause to complain of the health of my family, and in love bid you farewell.

M. S.

LETTER IV.

Solebury, 1st mo. 25, 1819.

DEAR BROTHER:

I trust it is unnecessary for me to say it gives me pleasure to know that I am affectionately re-

membered by thee, as expressed in thy letter of 10th month last; the long protracted answering of which, I give no apology for, but the inability I mostly feel to draw my mind from the necessary cares that surround me, sufficiently to indite any thing worth sending abroad. I read thy retrospect of the days of our youth with less admiration than I should have done at some preceding periods of my life; and though I approve thy moral reflections on the shortness and uncertainty of time, I feel no disposition to wish the return of a single hour that is past, unless I were assured I could spend it to a better purpose. I humbly hope, through the mercy of Providence, that those days were not blotted by any material guilt; but I feel a secret regret that they were so much devoted to vanity and sensual gratification. Reviewing them in this light, thou need not wonder that I have little estimation for the retrospect of my youth; but having, through divine mercy, beheld the vanity of the world and all its pursuits, as connected with itself alone, my chiefest pleasure now lies in endeavoring to live up to the end for which I was created. I do not know how thou wilt relish such a serious subject as this; but if thou art a stranger to the path of self-denial, believe me, thou art a stranger to the path of peace. Thou hast lived long enough in the scenes of active life, to know that crosses and disappointments are the invariable attendants on them. Hast thou been careful to mark the unerring hand of Providence therein? Hast thou

not often seen that prosperity and success in worldly concerns, have given wings, as it were, to the possessors or their children, wherewith they have soared above the pure and humble principle of the Christian? In other instances, behold them clogged as with thick clay, and grovelling in the earth, saying, in the express language of conduct, "To gold, thou art my hope, and to fine gold, thou art my confidence." I have often felt a great solicitude for thee in these respects; and encircled as thou art with the temptations to which a city life is peculiarly exposed, I have desired that thou may be preserved, so as neither to become a blemish to the Society of which thou art a member, a cause of grief to thy friends, nor prepare for thyself scenes of anguish through a wounded conscience. M. S.

LETTER V.

Solebury, 9th mo. 7, 1819.

DEAR BROTHER:

After a month's confinement, I feel my strength sufficiently renewed to answer thine of 8th mo. 13, which I received last week. We have felt the chastening hand of an all-wise Providence in our neighborhood very much, through the course of this summer, in excessive drought, but refreshing showers have of late been vouchsafed to us, whereby vegetation is somewhat revived, and the animated ploughman enabled to turn up the moistened soil. But I think it worth noting,

with gratitude to Heaven, that during some months of extreme heat and drought, salutary breezes have been almost every day experienced, and health has generally prevailed through the country. * * * *

Our dear and valued friend B. White has returned to us, but the satisfaction his return might have given us, is almost blasted by the unhappy situation of his mind. Some of his friends, however, think he will be enabled to wade through in time, but he is yet exceedingly depressed in spirit. I believe it is not apprehended he will have to return to Europe. M. S.

LETTER VI.

Solebury, 11th mo. 1, 1819.

DEAR BROTHER :

Having received thy letter from Catskill of 9th month last, I have been under considerable anxiety on thy account since, and would have written ere now, but for the uncertainty where a letter would find thee, or whether at all; and no intelligence has been had of thee since, till yesterday. We being at father's, heard by way of Philadelphia, that thou wast in New York, surrounded with the fever; and though I believe the protecting hand of Providence equally able to save in all places; yet I thought whether it was not inconsistent with sound judgment or religious duty, to risk health and life for temporal concerns. I often reflect on thy situation, and the

solicitude thou must no doubt feel on brother Moses' account. His cough is hard, though he complains of no pain except in his head ; he has received some medicine from a German doctor, who thinks he can cure him, or at least says he can ; but my hope is only in the great Physician who is able to heal all maladies ; and should it please Him to restore that health He hath taken away, my desire is that our brother may become an instrument of honor to His great name ; otherwise it would be better, far better, that he should be taken in youth from a world of vanity and corruption. I am obliged to thee for thy information about Hannah Stokes, and am sorry to reply to thy enquiries after B. White, that his situation is unspeakably distressing, not only to his connexions, but to every true member of the militant church that is acquainted with it. He is now in the Asylum near Frankford, and by what I can learn, suffering the deepest mental misery ; a state perhaps of utter despair of ever being again admitted into his Master's favor.

M. S.

LETTER VII.

Solebury, 12th mo. 12, 1819.

DEAR BROTHER:

Thine of the 6th instant came to hand this day, and I may express my thanks therefor, both as relates to thyself, and also for thy information concerning H. S. ; and in return I may inform

thee, by our last accounts B. White is something better. He attended our last Quarterly meeting, and gave in minutes from the London and Dublin Yearly-meetings, expressive of his acceptable services on those islands. We all continue to enjoy reasonable health, with slight intermissions of cold, except brother Moses, who continues to linger along with his cough and other infirmities, though not much pain. He is entirely confined to the house, though not to the room; and from a hoarseness attendant on the nature of his disease, he is frequently unable to speak louder than a whisper. * * * I think his declining strength renders it apparently incumbent on us all most earnestly to desire, and as much as we are capable of, endeavoring to promote, that his affections should become weaned and refined from all these changeable scenes, and he witness a full resignation to the sovereign will. M. S.

LETTER VIII.

Plumstead, 1st mo. 7, 1820.

DEAR BROTHER:

Having expected thy arrival by each returning stage for many days, we have not written to thee; but considering brother Moses' situation, and the desire he has expressed of seeing thee once more, we thought it most advisable to inform thee thereof. I am now at his bedside, where I have been watching since twelve o'clock

last night. He has rested tolerably well since about two o'clock this morning; his cough has somewhat abated, but I think when it seizes him now, it is more unyielding than at some former periods. He sits up but little, and that in the after part of the day. He has of late expressed a belief that he is fast declining, and has suffered much from an apprehension of not being fully prepared for a change; during which conflict, it has been an humbling season with us; yet according to my small measure, I have felt a comfortable belief, that although the great dispenser of events may see meet, for wise and unknown purposes, to try us as well as him with a great degree of uncertainty for a considerable time, yet that He will in the proper season unveil his face for his consolation and assurance; as I humbly trust He will condescend to complete the great work of repentance and regeneration of heart, that He hath mercifully begun. But oh! what a lesson of instruction hath it been! How desirable that we should all profit thereby. To see a beloved brother lying in deep anxiety for his eternal welfare, with a full sense of the impossibility of relieving him in any degree. Oh! said I in my heart, what years of labor would it be worth enduring, to arrive at that state where it is said—"The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

With affectionate regard, I remain thy sister,

M. S.

LETTER IX.

Plumstead, 1st mo. 29, 1820.

MY DEAR RELATIVES :

I have not been unmindful of the solicitude you must feel on our account, during so many weeks of silence, which has been occasioned by want of opportunity.

I remained with brother Moses all the week in which you left us. After this, various concerns kept me at home until the 27th of the 12th month, when a sudden change in my brother alarmed the family. I was sent for, and came immediately ; since which, the greater part of my time has been devoted here. We have seen the gradual progress of the disorder, till it has confined him to his bed ; it is now some time since he has been able to arise therefrom without nearly entire help. Since the physician who had flattered him with the expectation of conferring medical assistance, candidly informed him that he could give him none, (which was a few days previous to the sudden alteration in the 12th month,) he appears to have been under deep solicitude for his eternal welfare. He suffers much from the cough, and consequent sore throat, but patience, submission and love, have become the leading traits in his character—patience, in suffering all without a murmur ;—submission, in yielding up his will passively in all things relating to the body, to those who attend him, for whose ease he appears to feel an invariable concern ;

for his mother especially. I have watched with him a part of several nights, keeping my babe in the cradle by me, and feel a peculiar satisfaction in waiting on him.

2D MO. 3.—All is now over with dear Moses, as to this world. About a quarter after one, this day, he breathed his last; and I believe we have more cause to rejoice than mourn thereat; but it seemed as though our hearts must almost have burst with the impulse of the moment for brother George, who arrived but a few minutes too late to see his close, and was nearly overcome with the shock. He had been here before, but from the difficulty of leaving his business, returned to New-York in order to arrange it so as to be able to devote some time satisfactorily with Moses. But I trust the dear sufferer has joined the host of spirits, infinitely superior to any earthly society. I feel no ability to enter into any particulars that give cause for this hope, as it has been and continues to be, a time of humbling with me. I can only say, “let not thy hand spare, nor thine eye pity, till all within me that thy controversy is against, be done away. I believe I must now conclude, with love to you all, remaining your affectionate niece, M. S.

LETTER X.

Solebury, 4th mo. 25, 1820.

DEAR BROTHER:

I received thy pathetic address yesterday, and although I have no reason to doubt thy affection

for thy relatives in this land, yet it is comfortable to know, that amid all the fluctuating scenes of busy life, a correspondence remains with us not a little interesting. The health of our family is nearly as when I wrote last. Our little Ann continues delicate, but I have some hope she will outgrow her disease in time. When I say I have hope, I don't wish to be understood as anxious about her recovery; for should He who gave her see meet to take her away, I believe it could not be a grief to know that we had one child in Heaven; and should He raise her to health and maturity, my prayer is, that her life may become a scene of devotion to Him and his cause on earth. I took her with me to Philadelphia, and attended the several sittings of the Yearly-meeting, except one. It was large, and divinely favored with a good degree of harmony, in which it concluded, with one sitting on Sixth-day. I was made glad in visiting J. W., to see the happy alteration in two of her children, and to hear of that of one more; but with what augmented joy could my heart congratulate her, to behold another dear and interesting member of the family, even the head, return in simplicity to the Father's fold. Religion always appears lovely, but peculiarly so in the youth; and notwithstanding all the subtle arguments of the enemy against a plain dress, I believe it not only an ornament, but a great safeguard to the wearer, when accompanied with consistency of conduct and deportment. And seeing it is a time of great

commotion without; a time that will "shake not only the earth, but the heavens also"—not only the sandy foundation of men, but also the false heavens in which many are trusting. How important is it that we rally to the invincible standard; that we come down from the false heavens, the unsubstantial heights of vain speculations in religion, and centre inward to the pure principle of ruth, the one thing needful, whereby we shall be enabled to find the path of which it is declared, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein." I spent some time very pleasantly with our cousins R. S. and D. C., at the house of cousin J. B., in whose situation I have felt deeply interested: greatly coveting that he may become a willing subject in the day of the Lord's power; for unless he does, I fear it will be by a heavy stroke in judgment he will have to bow. Mother informed thee of his late loss in his wife. I staid in his family most of the time while in town, and though some circumstances rendered it trying, I was favored with a comfortable belief that I was not out of my place in being with him at that time. I have just had the perusal of aunt M. H.'s letter, but it being at a time when my mind was under considerable exercise, and some time ago, that I believe I cannot at present give thee any particular account of their situation. I hope thou wilt continue to cherish those sentiments thou hast expressed, relative to our dear brother's last hours, and that we may unitedly profit by the

awful lesson. I feel a degree of gratitude not to be expressed, in that an unshaken belief is granted me of his happy admission into the rest of the righteous. * * * I consider the Muses dangerous dictators, in that they are apt to awaken the feelings, and raise or sink the ideas too much, in proportion as the subject is animating or otherwise. It is from a sense of this dangerous quality, that I have long since forborn all intercourse with them; and also the perusal of all kinds of pathetic poetry; yet I wish not to be understood as condemning it. * *

M. S.

LETTER XI.

Solebury, 6th mo. 29, 1820.

DEAR BROTHER :

It is neither because thy letter of the 11th ultimo was not duly received nor well considered, that I have not answered it sooner; but I find it difficult to perform the duties of wife, mother and sister, at all times. I may now inform thee our family is in usual health; our little Ann is still living, and much better than for some time past, but does not thrive. Thou heard, perhaps, that I took her to Philadelphia in the spring, in order to attend the Yearly-meeting, and was well satisfied in so doing; though, through much human reasoning, I found it a considerable trial, yet on my return, I could say I lacked nothing. I was glad of the intelligence thee gave me con-

cerning the late Annual meeting of New-York, and as thou hast opened the subject of the labors of the gospel messengers, I may venture to give my views on it. I think we read that those who "staid by the stuff, divided the spoil with those who pursued the enemy." We also read, that he who entered the vineyard at the eleventh hour, received the same wages as he who bore the burthen in the heat of the day. Therefore I believe the reward we shall hereafter receive, will not be proportioned to the magnitude of the work we perform, so much as to the faithfulness with which we perform it; and that the omission of known duty, in a single point, be it never so small, will add as much to our condemnation in the great day of account, as that of another, though he neglected or refused a mission to a great city. We all have duties to perform; some are chosen for vessels of peculiar honor in the Lord's house, that is the militant church, and there only do I imagine the degrees of honor are varied, but that the faithful of what class soever they may be on earth, will all be placed on the right hand of the good Shepherd, when done with time. But when favored with a right view of things, I see and feel the awful importance of this faithfulness, and that we not only willingly obey when directed, but like the young man in the Gospel, we earnestly enquire, What lack I yet?—and finding it comparable to great possessions, something very near and dear to be parted with, that we do not turn away sorrowful, but

endeavor cheerfully to give it up, believing that nothing will be required of us that it would be best for us to have, or that we will not be enabled to surrender. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER XII.

Solebury, 9th mo. 5, 1820.

DEAR UNCLE AND AUNT:

The account cousin E. gave me of the situation of your family, awakened a just degree of sympathy for you. I am sorry to hear of aunt's affliction of body—also of Hannah's poor health; but such is the nature of the tenure by which we hold our possessions here, subject to various degrees of trial; and I think I may say, happy for us when those trials affect the body only, and the mind is preserved in the proper sphere. I have often looked toward uncle with something of a desire to receive a line from him; but believing the privation is in best wisdom, I desire to endure that, with all others of the like nature, as well as many of even a more proving one, with the patience a Christian ought—hoping the Divine hand may not spare, nor his eye pity, till all within me that His controversy is against (and which I know to be much,) be utterly done away; that the heat of the furnace may not abate till not only the dross, but the reprobate silver, be consumed; and, dear friends, pray for me that I may endure to the end.

In looking over this, it seems like complaining, or magnifying little trials into great ones, which I believe would not be approved by the good Master, who, I am persuaded, afflicts not willingly.

Last week our Quarterly-meeting was held. It was large. Eight women friends not belonging thereto appeared in testimony. Elizabeth Walker was one of the number. * * *

M. S.

LETTER XIII.

Solebury, 6th mo. 21, 1821.

DEAR BROTHER:

After looking several times in vain for thy arrival, I at length received thy letter as a substitute. * * * I am a great moralizer, or rather spiritualizer, on those occurrences; therefore I cannot, without losing my wonted guard, say, "What a pity!" "A dreadful accident!" or any of those expressions that seem to denote regret or alarm, unless in cases where the moral or religious dispositions of a person appear to be endangered; but so far from it, that when I hear of occurrences that the generality of people look upon as accidents or misfortunes, I often find my mind turned to the great First Cause, silently to consider whether He has not some wise and benevolent purpose, in permitting those casualties that almost daily appear in neighborhoods, or among acquaintances,

sometimes visiting with sickness, losses and crosses of various kinds, in our sanguine pursuit of the things of time : all which, if they are not rebukes for unfaithfulness, ingratitude, or disobedience, may at least serve as mild and gentle hints, to remind us of the inconstancy and unsatisfactory tenure of every thing that can undergo a change. And happy, yea, blessed and thrice happy, when these things serve to open our eyes and direct our minds and affections to the excellency, the consolation and peace, that are to be found in the unchangeable truth ; in a reliance on that wonderful Being, who sustains the workmanship of His hands, and whose providence overrules all contingencies ! So interesting, so admirably calculated to soften the rough and uneven voyage of human life, is such a reliance on and faith in the Lord, I would that all the human race might be brought to know and experience it for themselves. My spirit is often melted within me into tenderness, and tears involuntarily dim my eyes, when I look over and contemplate the apparent situation of the youth, that interesting part of the human family, that of latter times seems to have entwined round my heart and affections, in such a manner that all that is capable within me of feeling, is moved in ardent desires that they might become enamored of the blessed truth—might have their eyes opened to see the beauty of holiness, and that the fascinating allurements of this world might be tarnished in their view, in such a manner that

the cords of vanity should no longer hold them in that cruel bondage that now enthrals many, yea, very many of them. What a different aspect would things wear among mankind, were this the situation of all. There would be no pleading excuses for this, that or the other unnecessary pursuit or indulgence, no looking at the example of others, or fearing the opinion of the world. Could we but live in the liberty of truth, we should be raised above all the slavish fears that we are encompassed with, and could freely speak and act as becomes rational creatures, formed with excellent endowment, and for no less purpose than serving and bringing glory to the King of Kings. I know not how it is that I have thus enlarged on the subject, but as it is, I leave it; and with briefly stating we are all well as usual, I bid thee farewell. M. S.

LETTER XIV.

Solebury, 9th mo. 23, 1821.

DEAR —:

Thine of 8th month 24, came duly to hand, and I was glad to hear of thy health and welfare. I should, perhaps, have answered it sooner, but receiving it on the eve of leaving home—not on an excursion of pleasure, as some do—for five days, but for that length of time devoted to a better cause. I attended the different Monthly-meetings below our own, and Newtown meeting on First-day following; since which time I have

been variously employed between my religious, my social and domestic duties. I may inform thee, myself and family enjoy very good health ; and if thy health stood in need of the sea breeze, perhaps it was well to attend to it ; but I suppose it must have been a considerable expense of time and money to take —, in thy way to it. I know but little of the real character of the company thou went to accommodate, but I love to see men, as they are verging beyond the meridian of youth, evince to the world a consciousness of their true dignity, by abstaining from a voluntary mixing with the light and thoughtless classes of younger years. As I could not well pass by that part of thy letter without notice, I have just given thee my candid opinion of it, and leave it to thy more serious hours to digest. M. S.

LETTER XV.

Solebury, 12th mo. 16, 1821.

DEAR UNCLE AND AUNT :

* * * * * I am always glad when I feel the liberty and find a way to visit my friends in a social way, but I believe it necessary to be very cautious how we mix visits of this sort with those of duty, especially to prolonging the time that duty requires. Under these kind of reflections I have suffered considerably, through and since my late visit, inso-much that my heart has seemed to recoil at the remembrance thereof ; but through divine mercy,

I have not felt one doubt respecting the rectitude of going to attend the Yearly-meeting. I have also been favored, at length, to settle in the quiet, and believe I was endeavoring to accommodate myself in the way that would best suit my husband's convenience, and that perhaps there was too much of the creaturely will alive, wishing for greater things than was meet for me at that time.

I have often thought of the conversation that passed the evening before I left you ; and some expressions of uncle Thomas remain with me, though I then felt no disposition nor ability to notice them. The great depravity, if I may so call it, that seems to pervade the minds of Friends, and the unedifying conversation that generally occupies the time if one goes to visit a friend or neighbor, is what I often lament in secret ; but as we seem to have been created social beings, and capable of deriving great advantage from society, I have not yet thought it right to withdraw therefrom, at suitable seasons. And though we may have to suffer in secret, it may sometimes be a benefit to us to do so ; and there may be some advantage, again, in being as it were, driven to the watchtower on such occasions.

1st mo. 13, 1822.—Having written the preceding some weeks since, and finding no conveyance therefor, it has lain dormant, as it were ; and I may own that a kind of aversion to appli-

cation of this kind, has in great measure prevented me from adding thereto. I have, with the exception of one week devoted to the attendance of all our Monthly-meetings, also the Quarterly-meeting, been very industriously engaged, mostly in my family, since I came home; rising early and lying down late, and being favored with unusual ability to perform the requisite duties pertaining thereto. I have mostly moved with alacrity of heart; nevertheless my desire has been, that no earthly tie, either small or great, may withhold me from yielding to known duty, or fasten my mind improperly to things below. * * * *

I now desire to be kindly remembered to dear E. Pugh; the little time I spent with her on my way to West Grove seemed to instil a kind of new life into my then tried mind. My love, united to that of my husband, is to each of you and to your family. M. S.

LETTER XVI.

Solebury, 2d mo. 25, 1822.

DEAR BROTHER:

Thy letter of 12th month last, though yet unanswered, was duly received and valued; and as I had nothing particular to inform thee of, I have deferred writing till now. Thy conceptions of the difficulties it is possible to surmount, when actuated by a sense of duty, are very just; and my desire is, that thou mayest come to know

them verified in thy own experience ; for whatever are the straits and difficulties to pass through—the narrow prejudices of a world (which comprehendeth not the way) that are to be braved—I will yet prefer the narrow path of truth to all that can be enjoyed in the broad way, though multiplied to a hundred fold.

The deep sense of weakness that I felt previous to setting out for New-York, together with various circumstances attending, was such as to require something of an experimental feeling of the saying of our blessed Lord, when strongly tempted : “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” The sympathy and fellow-feeling that I met with there, in some that were personal strangers to me, I have numbered among none of the least of the blessings that have attended my short life ; and I returned home with the satisfaction of having done what I believed my duty. I had the same feeling on returning from Baltimore, and though I consider it a favor that in both these journeys my lot was cast where I had one relative, whose countenance was somewhat like a shield among strangers, yet *that*, in neither case, had any weight in the scale of my duty in going.

M. S.

LETTER XVII.

Solebury, 5th mo. 5, 1822.

DEAR BROTHER:

Thine of 3d month 12, though duly received, and affording me a degree of satisfaction, the nature of my engagements, both of hands and heart, hath hitherto prevented me from answering. In truth, writing has become almost impracticable with me, having no life left in relating the common occurrences of things in general, and being greatly shut up from the privilege of writing or speaking of those things wherein my soul only delighteth; that I sometimes look on myself as having a dispensation of silence committed to me, wherein I often find it necessary to sigh for preservation in the faith, and in the patience. I attended our late Yearly-meeting to satisfaction, which I believe was a favored one to many, though I was not permitted to partake much thereof; but in some degree to feel the earnest of repeated petitions for preservation, as under the hollow of the Holy hand; sitting a silent spectator of the transactions of the meeting, wherein I think I never saw more of an exercise prevalent for the restoration of the Society, vocally expressed. We had the company of Ann Almy, Jemimah Kees, and several other women Friends from a distance, mostly from the Eastward. We had also the company of George Withy in our department on Sixth-day morning, who, in an awakening manner, revived the pro-

phet's expostulation with the daughters of his people, for their pride in adorning themselves.

Thy hint respecting affairs in the religious department is lamentable indeed, insomuch that I said in my heart, "Alas for our beloved Society, what will become of it?" It is cause of the deepest sorrow to me, to hear or see any thing like rents or divisions among those who stand conspicuous as way-marks amongst us. But there must be a cause;—truth and error, light and darkness, do not and cannot dwell together. I fear that E. H. has had a severe trial or trials to encounter. If thou can give me any favorable account of things, I hope thou wilt do it soon; but I think I would rather not hear the names of individuals.

M. S.

LETTER XVIII.

Solebury, 12th mo. 15, 1822.

DEAR BROTHER:

I received thine of the 4th inst. last evening; was glad to find thou wast recovering thy health, and felt a glow of gratitude to the nurses, whoever they were, that had paid so much attention to a stranger in a strange land, comparatively speaking. The uniform good health thou appears to have enjoyed, may well be numbered among the richest blessings temporarily bestowed by the bountiful Giver of all good; but as thou observes, those dispensations called by the great bulk of mankind afflictions, are not, in reality,

such; but that they are benevolently dispensed, or permitted for the trial of faith, for reproofs of instruction, and sometimes for correction or chastisement of sin and transgression; and for which cause soever they are inflicted, happy are we, if we yield our hearts to the just appreciation of them; as I believe they will be treasured up as visitations of divine mercy to the soul; and if slighted and rejected as such, may appear against us in the day of account. Undoubtedly, the Searcher of hearts best knows in what way to deal with us, and the different dispensations of His hand are, no doubt, suited to the different dispositions of mankind. M. S.

LETTER XIX.

Solebury, 2d mo. 2, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER:

Last night I received thine of 1st month 28, for the contents of which I am much obliged to thee, as they relate to an interesting subject; but in styling our dear friend "head of the church," there is an error, perhaps only of the pen; as our Saviour told his disciples, "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." There has been much, and perhaps still is much said concerning Elias Hicks' doctrine; but I am so firm a believer that I have not been shaken, I think, in the least, though I did not get to hear him at all when last amongst us. I believe it must be best for us to let disputations on subjects

of a religious nature alone, except urged by feelings of necessity, where the honor of truth, and maintenance of the blessed cause thereof, demand our sentiments; and *then*, let not prejudice blind, nor the fear of man prevent the declaration of them. I have sometimes to view the actions of mankind with a kind of astonishment and awe, when finally my mind centres in this conclusion: "We must leave all, and come out of all"—seeing that nothing can be relied on but truth, and its everlasting source. The late transactions in Philadelphia seem to have aroused the people pretty much, and many have set about searching the ancient writings of Friends, which have been found to coincide with E. H.'s doctrine to satisfaction. I notice thy kind proposal to furnish me with copies of the transaction, as drawn up by a spectator; but as I am not wavering on the subject, I am not anxious to see them, as to my own particular. M. S.

LETTER XX.

Solebury, 3d mo. 11, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER:

It seems with me to give thee another token of my remembrance, and to inform thee we are enjoying pretty good health: that is, we are all able to take our regular meals, sleep sound, and attend to our ordinary business;—a favor that many, up and down in our land, do not experience at this time. But if the bed of sickness is felt to be

made by the best of all nurses, the Physician of value, then the sick chamber becomes as a little Bethel, and much to be preferred to the continual round of good health, if the activity of the body and the genius of the mind, hurried or sliding softly on in the same channel, are pursuing the bubbles of the ocean of time, heaping up treasure on earth; some in accumulating what is called wealth; some in pursuit of abundance of learning; some in gratifying an almost insatiable thirst for gaiety, mirth and pastime; and some, avoiding all extremes of these kinds, living so as to escape the censure of the world, or even of those they esteem good, are yet far behind-hand in their accounts with Him who sees not as man seeth, and in whose eyes they are, perhaps, far the most culpable of all. Of this latter class, I sometimes almost tremble with fear, lest I shall become one; lest through distrust, diffidence, human reasoning, fear of the world, love of ease, or what cause soever, I lag behind the true guide. If obedience does not keep pace with knowledge, I shall fall under condemnation.

I have been looking for a letter from thy hand, since we wrote last, which was the fore part of last month; and being written in haste, was perhaps incoherent in some points. There has been much said about Elias Hicks, and some very unpleasant things have occurred. Friends whom I highly esteemed for religious worth, have understood him or taken him differently from what I believe he really is. Although I did not hear

him at all, while last amongst us, I have a belief that he is sound in the fundamental principles, as professed by this Society in the beginning. It is said he denies the divinity of Jesus Christ; but I have all along believed, that from his manner of reasoning, those heads that could not contain quite as much as his, lose some words, which, though they do not strike the ear with the same force as some others, are nevertheless of equal importance, as they would go to qualify others, and render the thread of argument, if I may use the term, complete. It is, however, necessary to be very cautious how we hear, for I find that things are greatly exaggerated, and I do hope it is more through misunderstanding than unsoundness, that many take the part they do. I wish to hear how the matter is going on in New-York. We had the company and excellent labors of Richard Mott at our late Quarterly-meeting; but I heard he returned home immediately after it. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER XXI.

New-York, 6th mo. 23, 1823.

DEAR HUSBAND:

It is greatly in the cross that I send this, instead of coming myself; but we did not arrive here till yesterday morning at 8 o'clock. I attended both meetings in this city to my satisfaction; met Hannah Stokes at Hester-street, and

went home with her, in company with Elizabeth Hopkins, sister to Beulah Twining. Thou knows my prospect of going on to Long Island ; but not seeing how or in what way I am to get there, I must dwell in the patience, believing a way will be made, or I shall be released. Brother George proposed taking me there, but not being well this morning, we shall not go to-day ; therefore I commit thee and the dear children to the Lord, with the hope you will be preserved by Him ; and if I should not get home this week, do not be concerned about me ; only, when thou feels the spirit of prayer, ask for my preservation. I have seen the Lord's wonders in the mighty deep since I left home, and I see it is an awful day, in which every one must stand upon his own foundation. And I would that all might hear and obey the call, " to your tents, O Israel." God is our tent, and in him alone we shall find safety. I trust you will do the best you can without me ; and I shall be glad to get a letter by the next mail after thou gets this. As to the manner of my returning home, I must leave it, and if thou canst give me any instructions, I will endeavor to attend to them. My kind love to all, and to inquiring friends.

M. S.

LETTER XXII.

Solebury, 7th mo. 7, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER :

After leaving thee on the wharf, I had a comfortable passage in the steamboat ; the friends

to whose notice thou commended me, paid every necessary attention. After dinner, J. invited me to accompany himself and wife into a cabin in front of the boat, to see a man perform what he called a sleight of hand. I felt a reluctance to going; but, impelled by a secret something, I went; and after the poor creature had shown his pitiful tricks, I was constrained to bear my testimony against such a perversion of the faculties given to man. We landed safe at N. B., and I was placed in the stage, with my companions, and proceeded to Trenton, where we did not arrive till dusk. I met with a kind reception at my friend I. S.'s. * * * *

* * * * Next day had a comfortable time at father Smith's, there being a number of children and others who could not get to meeting. Thus thou sees how I have been employed since I left thee. And on looking over the past, the trials and difficulties I have experienced seem to vanish, leaving no trace behind them, only that they once existed. My peace and satisfaction are also the same;—I only remember I was tried; tempted, persecuted, and falsely spoken of; that I was supported through and over all, by a power not to be comprehended by man; and now to know that I stood accountable to my Creator for the present actions of my life; that the past availeth me nothing; without looking to the future, I only desire to live as I ought the present moment. I am anxious to hear from thee, how thy health is in particular. Do not disguise the

truth in that respect. I also wish to hear how affairs go on in the city;—I think it one of the most interesting eras that has ever been in our Society—a day wherein we are called upon to come out of the forms and rules of mere profession, into the life and substance of true religion.

M. S.

LETTER XXIII.

Solebury, 8th mo. 1, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER:

I received thine of 7th month 3, in due course, and would have answered it sooner, but having mailed one previously thereto, I have been waiting with no small solicitude for an answer to that. I was glad to hear of the amendment of thy health, and hope thou wilt be careful of it; I also request thou wilt be candid in letting us know if it should decline; and by all means to inform us immediately if thou gets sick, as I think, unless something material was the matter, I could easily attend thee. Such is the abstracted situation of my mind, that I feel as much at home in any place where I am drawn, as I do at what is called my home, and indeed much more so than when I am here and my mind drawn elsewhere, which has been much my case since I returned from New-York. * * * *

* * I plainly perceive there are none on whose faith experience, example or precept, it will do for me to rely; and I also perceive there

has been a disposition in me to conform to the views of those I esteemed preferable to myself, and that I have even been in danger of denying the testimony, if I have not actually done it, rather than speak and act in a manner contrary to those views. Therefore, seeing the awful vortex from which I have been preserved, I feel the importance of firm adherence to what I now believe to be my duty; and under this head is comprised a faithful testimony against all unrighteousness and worldly lust, the greatest degree of which I conceive to be robbing God of his just due, and giving that honor to the creature that belongs to the Creator only. I may, perhaps, be thought pointedly severe; but knowing the integrity of my motives, I must leave the consequence to all-wise discretion. I am far from judging all who do not come out decidedly, as I believe I must. If they are not yet called upon in this way, I have nothing to do with condemning them. My proper sphere of action is in the vineyard of my own heart, and there I desire to be found daily laboring. I never felt myself so much at liberty, nor so much released from what I may call the concerns of other people; but let no one imagine this liberty has been stepped into at once out of the world; it is the succeeding stage in the Christian course, to long and deep imprisonment, insomuch that I have sometimes thought my lot was to be as John the Baptist, who ended his days in prison. But thanks to the Deliverer of souls, I was not consumed in

the day of trial, nor was my faith suffered to fail under deep proving. I can therefore say to others, from a degree of experience, "it is good to trust in the Lord, and in the might of his power, that though sorrows may continue all the night, joy cometh in the morning." M. S.

LETTER XXIV.

Salebury, 8th mo. 21, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * * I will now recur to thy letter of last month. To some of the contents I gave a partial answer in my last ; but with regard to a reform in our Society, I believe it as impossible in the present state of things, for it to come quietly and peaceably about, as for a new birth to take place in a corrupt heart without the sensible perception thereof. At present, I seem to see nothing about who will resign, or who will be disowned ; but my belief has become strengthened, yea, I think confirmed, that the true church militant never can be governed by human laws ; but that this church never will exist in a body on earth—I am unwilling to suffer such an idea. Nay, the eye of my mind rolls on to future ages, when no partition walls shall stand betwixt man and man ; when the soul shall be the only object of attention ; when form, or color of the skin, shall not stand as barriers in the way of that freedom man was created with a capacity to hold and enjoy. And one great step towards this

would be, for mankind to become convinced that religion is one of the simplest things in nature ; that it is nothing more nor less than obedience to the dictates of the divine spirit ; that it is equally within the reach of all, and that we all stand on an equality in sight of our Creator, till we voluntarily sink ourselves below the common level by departing from His law, which is obedience and love. The enemy, which I believe to be the carnal reasoner in man, has long held its captives under the apprehension that it is presumption to believe that every solitary individual is designed for an instrument of good, and to bring glory to the Almighty Creator. At the same time, this idea produces effects directly contrary to true humility. It makes us not those benevolent beings who are ready to do a good office to a fellow creature at any time. Nay, it makes us only obsequious to the low, groveling propensities of our corrupt inclinations and desires. I believe these abundantly exist among the professors of the law ; for such I esteem formalists in religion, who, for want of faithfulness in that dispensation, are like ancient Israel, wandering backward and forward in the wilderness, instead of coming out as polished instruments, under the glorious dispensation of the gospel.

I may now inform thee I expect to make a considerable excursion, of which I had a view before I left New-York, though a partial one. It is to pay a general visit, in social love, to all my connexions, friends and acquaintances, in Chester

county, Maryland, and perhaps Virginia. I felt free to ask Charles to accompany me in such a visit, this fall, soon after I came home. He thought it would not be convenient for him till winter; and there the matter settled, and I seemed to be pretty easy, as it lay at such a distance; for truly I yet love too well to put these things off as long as possible. But my mind has not been settled here, nor have I found rest for the sole of my foot, in the enjoyment of my family. After a close conflict last week, wherein the deprivation of some of my children seemed presented to my view, and I was even made willing to say, "not my will, but thine, be done," light gradually arose on the immediate performance of that visit; and after repeated desires for a clear manifestation herein, it opens on setting out next week. I expect to be absent four weeks; but I am led so much like a child that I do not know enough to make positive calculations at all. I stand simply resigned to be led at any time and any where the Master pleaseth. I spent a few hours yesterday at Edward Hicks's, in Newtown. He complained of feeling poorly and low-spirited, but manifested so much life in the cause of religion, that I was much strengthened; for I stand so much alone here, that I feel an almost constant depression. There is such an outcry for *stillness*, *caution*, and "*don't go too fast*," that in fact I think many act more like Infidels than believers in the precious life within. And truly, it is very plain to me, that he who believeth

in the inward guide, and yet doth not attend to the monitions thereof, rather than to the wise and prudent maxims of this world, is worse than he that believeth not in such a teacher. It is also said in Scripture, the fearful and unbelieving are to have their portion together. M. S.

LETTER XXV.

West Grove, 9th mo. 7, 1823.

DEAR HUSBAND :

* * * I am renewedly confirmed in the belief, that I must become as a weaned child from the world, and entirely dependent on the pure milk of the Divine Word, that is able to create all things anew within me. I have felt my mind frequently clothed with desires for thy and the children's preservation, not only in my absence, but at all times. Yet, to suffer my thoughts often to dwell on the outward circumstances of the family, I find would be like partaking of forbidden fruit. I therefore endeavor to leave all to the disposal of Divine Providence, fully believing He is able to bless or blast our works, as our hearts are found to be sincere or not in his sight ; and knowing that He sees us as we really are, I leave mankind to say what they will, and press forward in humble trust that as He has hitherto been my stay and defence, He will continue to be my director, if I look rightly to Him. I am endeavoring to guard every avenue of my heart against the entrance of

anxiety for my family ; fearing, if freely admitted, it would destroy my comfort, and might thereby be a means of frustrating the designs of Divine Wisdom respecting me. M. S.

LETTER XXVI.

West Nottingham, 9th mo. 14, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER :

Thine of the 26th of last month, together with the examination of G. W.'s address, came to hand a few minutes before I left home, which was on the 13th ult. I pass over the various trials that my mind experienced previous thereto, and also since, as something calculated rather to instruct me in the way of redemption from the world, the customs, maxims and opinions thereof, than to entertain or edify another. Suffice it to say, I left home with only the staff of Faith for support ; a reliance on internal light, for a guide and director. And here I must observe, what a striking proof it is of the instability of mankind, and the powerful effects of the prejudice of education, that a people, the foundation of whose systematic fabric was this same light, should have so far degenerated, as in life and conduct to deny the efficacy and sufficiency thereof. But such degeneracy is in the very nature of things, and the proneness of the human heart to seek for outward support, I believe will continue to overspread the earth, while the true militant church is believed to *rest* on any thing like rules

and orders, that must be supported by bodies of people. And till a more general manifestation of that higher dispensation that has already dawned on the mind of some, deep, very deep, will be the baptism of many. That this higher dispensation will advance, I am fully confirmed, when the sword, that dividing instrument, shall be beaten into a ploughshare, and the spear, that pierces to the quick, into a pruning hook. The internal eyes of some are already opened to behold the deep, mysterious meaning of these things, as reaching beyond an allusion to a mere cessation of outward hostilities. And as a happy prelude to that blessed day, I look upon the confusion, turning and overturning amongst men in the present day; believing that when the old heavens and the old earth shall be rolled up, and "vanish like a scroll," that the new heavens and the new earth will appear to an astonished world; yea, that it will appear as a morning without clouds, having neither spot nor wrinkle therein. At the approach of that day, I fear some will, like the favored people of the Lord formerly, believing as they did, that having Abraham for their father, and the law of Moses for their guide, they were on the sure foundation,—therefore reject the truth, in its new form of appearing. But methinks I would not shrink from any suffering that may be meted to me, if happily I might be a means of persuading any to stand resigned, and ready to be moulded into any shape the great Potter may see fit to fashion them in. O, that

all may beware of that stubborn, creaturely zeal, that is built on the example and precept of our forefathers, instead of an experimental knowledge of the truth in ourselves. Having tasted and handled of these things myself, I know what I write ; but as I believe thou wilt not feel conscious of having acted under the influence of that zeal, thou wilt not take that sentence to thyself.

* * * * I enjoy myself pretty well here in a social way, but the gloomy fog of superstition and prejudice is enough to make the soul sick with inhaling its vapors ; and methinks I would gladly retire with my family into some lonely desert, where the mournful state of captivated man might no longer be present to my eyes. But I strive to become willing to endure my allotted portion of suffering ; often remembering what the Saviour suffered for us. I must cut short, in concluding this with love to all—in a particular manner the sincere hearted ; and desire for the restoration of all others. M. S.

LETTER XXVII.

Baltimore, 9th mo. 17, 1823.

DEAR HUSBAND :

* * * * Though my mind has been deeply tried, my faith has not failed. But such is the tenure of my standing, that I find it dangerous to look backward or forward, and above all, to look outward ; but in humility I can say, if I *must* perish, it may as well be in endeavoring to gain the kingdom, as in

standing in a false rest, which I fully believe a trusting in any of the experiences or opinions of other people, would be to me. In trust that Providence will be a protector to thee and the children, I bid you farewell. M. S.

LETTER XXVIII.

Baltimore, 10th mo. 3, 1823.

DEAR HUSBAND :

* * * * * I am in usual health, and feel my mind much relieved from the grievous burthen of traditional prejudice. I have laid my notions of distinction in the dust. The opinion of man is of no consequence to me, as respects myself, and my only desire is that I may be kept low and humble in the sight of God. That He will accomplish his own designs concerning me, I have no doubt, if I do not prove refractory, and fly from His hand. Each night when my head rests on the pillow, a secret desire arises from my heart to the Preserver of all, for thy preservation; and in this I rest, for I know that of ourselves we can do nothing, and that "unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." M. S.

LETTER XXIX.

Solebury, 11th mo. 5, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER :

I have been looking for a letter from thee, but considering thou, perhaps, does not know I have

returned home, I have not been disappointed much in not getting one. After a tour of almost eight weeks, I returned on Fifth-day, the 23d of last month, having been favored with health of body and serenity of mind : that notwithstanding the dark cloud of opposition and prejudice rolled over my head, yet my soul was centred in confidence in the Supreme Power in which I trusted. And though outward commotions shook every thing that could be shaken, still the rock of ages being my only defence, I was enabled to repose in peace beneath its mighty shadow. My family also was preserved in health during my absence. The books thou last sent, came safely to hand. The one in reply to G. W.'s farewell address, I left with Charles, but have read it since my return, with a good deal of interest, deeming it well calculated to counteract the influence of the former. But wonderful to observe, the stationary constellations, in the old dispensation, seem not disposed to yield to the superior light that has dawned, and like those sparkling luminaries, will no doubt continue to twinkle in the firmament of righteousness, till the powerful rays of the advancing sun shall fairly overpower the fainter light. Please let me know if Priscilla Hunt has been with you, and if she gets along pretty well. I feel desirous of hearing from Friends at the Eastward ; for truly, report is so much against them, that had I not been there and felt for myself, I should perhaps have run in opinion with the torrent. But what is this new

dispensation to produce? I feel calm in the reflection, that perhaps the day may come, when like our holy Pattern, we may be constrained to suffer the scoffs of the world and the ruin of reputation therein, without opening our mouths in defence, but suffering silently and patiently, commit ourselves, with our cause, to the Lord. I have felt no hesitation in letting any one see those letters of S. Philbrick, that was willing to read them, but it is considered somewhat like spreading poison, by those who are already alarmed for the tottering peace of Society. — has never written to me, but she is not far from me in spirit, and unless she is willingly swayed by the love of popularity, I think she will come out plainly on the side of truth. I should like to know whether she has read S. P. or not, but it matters little. If those who feel the full weight and importance of faithfulness, only keep a single eye to the truth, and walk by the light thereof, all obstacles will give way in due time, as the walls of Jericho did to the leader and his host formerly.

I have been looking over what I have written, and find I have given thee no account of my visit after I wrote thee from Baltimore, at which place I spent, altogether, about ten days, which was, throughout, to satisfaction on my part; though the pomp and ceremony of the city were burdensome to bear. I wrote a kind of diary to my husband, which thou may read when thou comes over here. * * * I want thee

to give me a full account how you are getting along. I understand Edward Hicks has been to see you. M. S.

LETTER XXX.

Solebury, 12th mo. 15, 1823.

DEAR BROTHER :

Day after day has passed by since I received thy letter of 13th of last month, and yet I have not answered it ; for which I hope thou wilt excuse me, that out of seven weeks and three days since I returned from Chester county, I have been from home twenty-three days more or less ; that I find no excuse will avail me, from an unremitted dedication of time and talents to the cause in which I have enlisted. Concerning Anna Braithewaite, I met her in Philadelphia, in the Ninth month, at Pine-street meeting, and attended an evening meeting at Arch-street, appointed by her, for all the young people who chose to attend. At the first of these, she was very clear in testimony ; but at the latter, her ministry was much mixed. I also heard her in Baltimore, on the morning of Tenth month 5th, clear and satisfactory, though not in a manner calculated to drive the enemy from his strong holds, in the present day, so well as our dear P. H. To thy query concerning our uncle I. W., I can say, it was easy enough for me to get along there ; for whatever notions people of that class entertain of the Lord's servants, there is little of

that deadly malevolence to be found among them that the enemy of all good is stirring up among the high professors of religion. Cousin J., I believe, has not much dependence upon literal forms, but has not seen far enough to adopt, or fully approve, all E. H.'s doctrine, though he united with him in many things; but when opposers, or even those who, knowing but little for themselves, are alternately the tools for either party, get hold of a word or a sentiment from such a person as cousin J., they can soon blow it into a flame of disunity, though perhaps it amounted to no more than disapprobation of a few sentences; and this I believe to be the fact in the present instance. Cousin A. P. is decidedly opposed to all formal profession and performance. Thy judgment of our Nottingham friends is quite correct, and I hope that no consideration of an interested nature will induce thee to fly from the standard of truth in thine own breast. If cousin E. W. has broached the subject, it becomes thee, perhaps, to pursue it with calmness and firmness. I am persuaded they have suffered themselves to become the dupes of prejudice, misapprehension, or report, and so fixed in it, it was not very pleasant being there. Perhaps a clear statement of our dear old friend E. H.'s standing in Society at home, would unbend their minds a little from the confidence they appear to have in the Right Honorables in Philadelphia. But let who will cling to the old system, as managed now-a-days, or rather

to the managers, it will not do for those whose eyes are opened to see through these moonlight shadows, to wink at them, or turn their backs on the truth. Persecution is creeping along, and no one knows how soon he or she may be the object of it.

There has been a great revival at Trenton; there are four young women, and a youth in his teens, that appear in the ministry; and the order of Society has been publicly violated by a select member, towards one of these. The term *Ranters* has been applied to them. Thus we see how near our doors the scene is approaching; and happy for those who, agreeably to the injunction of the divine Master, shall see and hear these things, and not be troubled. But before we come to this, we must experience Christ so to reign in our hearts, that we are willing to give all up—reputation, right in Society, and all that man can deprive us of; and when we have nothing to lose in this world, we shall not be moved with fear and dismay at the signs of the times. I have felt my mind much drawn in unity with our dear friend Elias; his views, as mentioned in the Quarterly-meeting, are so consonant with my own, that I can give him the right hand of fellowship therein; and would think it no hardship to go once more to Jericho, to see and converse with him.

I have had a pressing invitation to go to Plainfield, to see our afflicted cousin, Sarah Shotwell, which, if way should open, I feel my mind at

liberty to accept; and if so, I may make thee a visit also; but the wind, that bloweth where it listeth, often turns my little bark contrary to whither I was steering; so that there is but little dependence to be put on my outward arrangements. My hearty good wishes are for the preservation and encouragement of the honest-hearted and faithful, both far and near, well knowing that the good of the cause will be effected in proportion as individuals stand firm and upright in it; that the burthen of some will be greatly increased, if others shrink from their allotted portion of labor. I am fully persuaded that a fresh invitation of divine love is now extended to the inhabitants of the earth; and all that is capable of feeling within me, longs that we may not be the instruments of perverting the renewed blessing into an aggravated curse, by thwarting the designs of Providence, to the provoking a just and merciful God to anger, so as to cause the hiding of His face again from many to whom the blessing was intended. If we consider our Society as bound together in the indissoluble bonds of a Father's love, we shall be continually led into doubts and evil surmisings, at the contrariety of opinions and sentiments amongst us. But when we reflect we are but the lineal offspring of believers, from whom we can inherit nothing but weakness and instability, yet bound together by the same outward rules, (and hence the mistaken notion, that all are of the same faith,) it is no way surprising that these divisions should take place. Nay, but

in the very nature of things they must, that is, they will be. How astonishing is the weakness and blindness of men, that they should think their own Society had arrived and were dwelling in that state of perfection to which the followers of Christ were called; and if not, that it could be possible, according to the plans of Infinite Wisdom, that we should slide into it out of our present state of ease and contentment, without a noise and commotion. Vain idea! Never can such a thing be expected; and rather than stand still and desire it, let us turn to the source of good, and seek to draw from thence that succor which will enable us to stand in the day of trial; in the day when the elements shall clash, and all that can be moved shall be shaken; when the heavens of man's own creating shall be rolled together, and vanish as a scroll. Then shall those whose trust is in the Lord alone, see the new heavens and the new earth; all the creation will become new, and of God. * * *

M. S.

LETTER XXXI.

Solebury, 1st mo. 26, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER:

Thy letter of 16th of last month came duly to hand, and was very acceptable, as I feel great interest in the passing events of the day, in every department of Society. The further I am favored to see into the reality of the Christian

religion, the more I am persuaded I have nothing to do with judging what is the special religious duty of individuals. The Master is all sufficient for his own work; he can raise up and send forth whom he pleaseth; and we have need to be very cautious in questioning the authority of any one, lest we be like the people of old, who said, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" also, "When Messias cometh, we know not whence he is." But in order to become useful in the Master's vineyard, we must seek to become acquainted with the language of truth; and by keeping the internal ear open to that, and the eye single to its light, we shall be gradually instructed in those things that are meet for us, and new things will be opened, as our capacity will bear them. And we shall find plenty of employment for the mind in contemplating the wonderful works of the Creator, and the wily stratagems of that part in man which was at first pronounced good, but became perverted; and how it works and is working, in order to get a kingdom to itself, and thus draw man off from his allegiance to his Maker. As we become thoroughly acquainted with these, we shall see not only the emptiness of all earthly enjoyments, but we shall see the ingratitude and presumption of acting from any other motives than pure disinterested love to our Heavenly Father. There is a most striking likeness between our individual relations and that of our first parents. The fruit of the forbidden tree is presented to our view in so

many various ways, and under so many plausible coverings, that unwary mortals are liable to be drawn aside every moment, unless on their guard.

Things wear a serious aspect at Trenton and Middletown. From the latter place Charles and myself have just returned; but it would take much time to note particulars. We dined yesterday at the house of Stephen Comfort, sen. He and his wife are worthy friends, but they have suffered themselves to be improperly biased against Elias Hicks, and on being with them, I felt that secret regret which I had felt for some dear, goodly friends at the Eastward, who neither knew nor felt any harm in themselves, but by listening with a carnal ear, their better judgment had become warped. We spent a few hours at Edward Hicks's, as we came home. He has been into Chester county, lately; he met with cousin J. W., and was pleased with him.

2D MO. 19.—Thou wilt be surprised, no doubt, at the different dates of this letter, but no misfortune has been the cause. My time has been so much engaged of late, that I scarcely know how it has passed. Charles and myself attended the Quarterly-meeting at Abington, two weeks ago; also a meeting for William Foster the next day; and then went into Philadelphia, where Charles left me the Second-day following. I attended all the meetings of our Society in the city, and Pine-street and North meetings twice

over. The second time I was at Pine-street, four of the elders detained me in the meeting house, and one of them, after stating to me that he had been informed I was not in unity with my friends at home, and also that I had made considerable disturbance in Rhode Island, advised me to return home and take care of my family ; thus practically denying the New Testament, which abundantly sheweth that all must be given up for the Master's sake. A Friend, at my request, sat with me, and informed me she had listened attentively to my testimony, and was not uneasy with it ; but it was close dealing, and not to be marvelled at as touching the Pharisees. I was preserved, on the occasion, from the paw of the lion, and also strengthened to pursue the path of duty afterwards. On Second-day evening last, I attended the Christian meeting in Southwark, with which I was well satisfied. A worthy minister amongst them, Frederick Plummer, appointed the meeting, at my request, and attended with us. I know not what stir will be made about it, neither am I concerned ; my chief desire being to know the Master's will, and do it. The more the truth is persecuted, the brighter it shines, and the more desirable to be attained. Let us obey the injunction of the Master : " Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." I conceive this is very important, and that there is no way to avoid this leaven but by strict obedience to manifested duty. Third-day I was favored to rise over all

opposition to the truth, I think, more than ever I had before. After I sat down, Othniel Alsop spoke from the passage of our Saviour taking the little child, and setting it in the midst, as an emblem of the state we must come into, before we can enter the kingdom. The text was so good, and so well handled at first, that I never thought of his being an opposer. After he sat down, and another friend gave information of a meeting for William Foster, to be held the next evening, I kneeled; when, to the astonishment of the people, most of those in the galleries kept their seats, and one man was actually pulled down after he had risen. If they had all sat still, I do not think I should have felt it; for such was the boldness with which the truth inspired me, and knowing I had many friends there, the shafts of the enemy fell at my feet. Three of the elders were in pursuit of me in the afternoon, and called twice at my lodgings, but I unknowingly escaped them, at which I felt regret; for if there had been full opportunity for them to discharge themselves, it is possible they might have shot away all their arrows, and then give up the contest; especially if there was firmness enough on the other side to maintain the ground. It has been an incalculable injury, both to individuals and Society, that this ground has been given up, at the approach of the enemy. I have, during this visit, made a valuable acquisition to my little circle of friends. I hope the many favors I have received will act

as a stimulus to further dedication; and that until there is a better way cast up in my mind, I may be strengthened to walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing, as hitherto.

M. S.

LETTER XXXII.

Trenton, 3d mo. 11, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER:

Being now on my way to New-York, I think best to send thee a few lines, in order that thou may meet me at the wharf on landing. I expect to leave this place on Seventh-day morning next, in the line that lodges at New Brunswick; of course I must land in the city on First-day morning. If thou wilt be so kind as to inform thyself of the time and place of landing, it would be particularly grateful to meet thee there. I left home on Seventh-day last, with my husband, and have been closely engaged since, in attending some meetings and visiting some of my friends. As I am coming in my usual way, without a written certificate, I know not how my friends in New-York will look upon me; but if thou canst endure the cross of it, I fear no other consequence. And if thou shouldst even be constrained to disown me, how much less will it be than the blessed Master had to endure! To-morrow William Foster has an appointed meeting here. I have been at three meetings where he was, within a short time, at

each of which I found it my duty to bear testimony to the truth. I have felt very desirous that I might not come in contact with him again; but this desire has been forced to yield to superior persuasion in my own mind; and though I feel it my place to be willing, so far as it may be put in my power, to "lay a shoulder to the wheel," yet my nature often has to go into deep suffering before I am brought into that state. And though it is my lot to go, time after time, into the furnace, may I never be released from this dispensation till the purifying operation is effected. I feel at times as though the heavens and the earth were vanishing away, and all was becoming empty space; but when I recollect that the new heavens and the new earth were to succeed the passing away of the old, I am encouraged to faith and patience. It is an important day, "a day of rebuke, a day of treading down, and of dismay;" but the sincere and faithful followers of the Lamb also know an arising at times, as from the dead, the shadows to flee away, and the morning of the sun of righteousness to arise in their hearts, clearly manifesting that the Lord is a strong tower, whereunto they may flee and find safety.

Unless something unexpected occurs, I hope to pursue my prospect on Seventh-day; but if I do not come, I hope thou wilt feel no uneasiness on my account. I have many kind friends here, with whom I am banded in suffering and rejoicing.

M. S.

LETTER XXXIII.

Solebury, 3d mo. 28, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER:

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We arrived at Trenton about nine o'clock at night, and I number it among the many favors, that I was kindly received at the house of my friend T. Sterling. His wife was on a visit a few doors off; and when she returned, late as it was in the evening, and also rainy, she accompanied me to see Hannah Stokes. Found her not so well as when I left her before. Lodged there that night. Next day turned my thoughts anxiously towards Pennsylvania, but saw no way to escape attending the week-day meeting, which is held on Fifth-day. I found my peace in so doing, and on that, as on many other occasions, was made to blush at my presumption and ingratitude, in suffering a thought so far to enter my mind as to form any thing like a wish of my own. New Bedford has long been presented to my mind, at times; and in such a manner, on setting out for New-York, that I ventured to stipulate, that if permitted to return, and get my family moved and settled, I would give up. This was more than I had ever ventured to do before, on feeling a divine requisition, and it has gone experimentally to prove to my mind the folly of looking forward to a more convenient season, as most assuredly such a one will never arrive. If then we were to set about becoming subject to the divine will, instead of saying, "I pray

thee, have me excused," how much easier the work would go on; for we need not expect to have things brought into unison with our vain wills; therefore the more we strive to counteract those wills, with their varied workings, the sooner will the conflict between flesh and spirit be over, and we come to the experience of light and liberty, that I fully believe we were designed to enjoy, even in this mutable state of existence. I hope the bond of love will continue to strengthen all those who sincerely name the name of Jesus. I attended our meeting to-day, and was met with a hearty welcome by a number of our members. The disciplinarians have not molested me yet. If they do, I will inform thee thereof. I have no fear on that score, as to myself alone; and if the All-wise Ruler permits my right of membership to be taken away, for my fidelity to Him, I doubt not that he will restore to me four-fold in peace of mind.

There have been some ridiculous stories circulated about me of late, and some of my friends have been hurt not a little by them; but whoever the authors or promulgators were, I feel nothing but good will in my heart to any on that account; and thus will the evil design of the adversary be frustrated; for where no malice is, his fire will not kindle. This is a desirable attainment, and a very possible one, though not to be come at without great humility, and a steady perseverance in what we believe to be right. Would that all mankind understood their best

interest, and were willing to pursue it. What an Eden would this world become! What harmony would reign, not only between man and man, but also between man and the lower orders of creation. Cruelty and oppression towards every grade of these would cease; and man, becoming deified through perfect obedience, would shine again in his Creator's image. I hope thou wilt not think me enthusiastic, as no doubt many would; but we may remember Paul was thought to be beside himself, for his report of the heavenly vision; and we need not think hard if we are sometimes thought to be fanatical.

M. S.

LETTER XXXIV.*Philadelphia*, 4th mo. 24, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER:

I have felt a good deal for thee within a week past, from a sense of the anxiety thou must suffer, from the various foolish reports that may reach thee, and which I know of no better way to obviate, than to inform thee I am in the perfect enjoyment of my senses; also blessed in the approbation, as well as affection, of my husband, and also of many friends, however rumor may say to the contrary. But what is much more than all, through the favor of divine aid, my mind is borne above the tide of conflicting report, evil surmising, and false rumor; so that it is all become a source of instruction to me; and

except in that way, I do not think any passing events of the day worth mentioning. Charles and myself left home on Sixth-day preceding the Yearly-meeting; came on and lodged that night at Benjamin Sleeper's; Seventh-day afternoon went to pay a visit to our friends M. Rotch and M. Newhall. Our interesting friend, Andrew Robeson, is with them. I esteem it a singular providence that they have been drawn here at this time, and my heart has been bowed in reverence to that divine Power, which is bringing the church once more up out of the wilderness, "leaning upon the breast of her beloved; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners;" even so terrible to the formal professors, that confusion and consternation of heart is overwhelming them, to that degree, that the disorder has become visible to the outward eye. I refer thee to the record of the New Testament. Acts xix: 23, to the end. But when this tumultuous uproar of contending passions in the minds of the people will be completed, we cannot at present foresee; but I believe they are not only in danger of being called to an account for *this day's* uproar, but many will have to give an account at a higher tribunal than that of men, even at the judgment seat of God. I attended the first sitting of the Yearly-meeting, and had some uncouth (to the carnal ear) observations to make. At the next sitting, I was constrained to testify against the superficial formality of the epistles from Rhode

Island and Baltimore to this meeting ; with the addition of some close remarks on the state of Society ; for which I was interrupted, and desired by name to sit down, by an elder of Buckingham Monthly-meeting ; which, however, I obeyed not, till I had in a measure relieved my mind. I am thus particular, from an expectation that thou wouldst hear something of the circumstance. Third-day, I attended, and on rising to speak, was pulled by the skirt to sit down, but fairly got through before I obeyed. Fourth-day meeting was occupied mostly by A. Braithwaite, who was remarkably fluent in expression, but her ministry carried not that convictive evidence that P. Hunt's did, to my mind. Fifth-day, I felt excused from attending any of the public meetings ; and in the afternoon, through divine aid, so far relieved my mind, that I attended no more of the sittings of the Yearly-meeting. I have been visiting some of the brethren, since. Charles attended all the sittings, and returned home on Seventh-day, on the afternoon of which, I went to Gloucester, with some of the society called Christians, and attended their meeting yesterday morning, in which I was favored with best help and consolation. The meeting was held in a school-house, by a little band of plain, simple hearted people. In the afternoon, I went to the meeting of the same people at Southwark. I became very much revived and comforted, in this little intermission from hard labor amongst a stiff necked people,

but expect I shall have to return to it again, before long. I may now inform thee, my present business seems to be to visit some families with whom I am acquainted, and return the last of this week, by way of the Falls, and reach home this day week. I also expect, at present, to be at New-York at the time of the Yearly-meeting, and proceed from thence to New Bedford. I providentially met with Lucy Gilpin this morning, by whom I write. And now, desiring thy mind may become established, so that thou shalt know, in this wonderful day, big with important events, the following lines to be true—

“ His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.”

I bid thee, affectionately, farewell. My love to friends of all classes, where occasion may occur to speak of me.

M. S.

LETTER XXXV.

New-York, 5th mo. 25, 1824.

DEAR CHARLES :

I embarked on board the steamboat at the time expected, amidst a large number of professing Friends, who came on in the stages from Philadelphia, amongst whom were Rachel Johnson, and Samuel Fisher's daughter Sarah, and a Friend named Thomas M'Clintock, who accosted me in a very friendly manner soon after we entered, his wife being also on board. They had

once called at B. Dorsey's to see me, but I was not in. We had a very pleasant passage, and struck the wharf about sunset. Brother G. had written me a letter, directed to Doylestown, requesting information how and when I was coming; and as he had received no answer, he concluded I had given out coming, and so was not looking for me; but Elijah Fish kindly came with me to the boarding-house. I went that night to my former friend, W. Pearsall's, and lodged. Next morning went to meeting at the new house in Rose-street. My feelings were awfully impressed on seeing Isaac Stevenson and Anna Braithwaite, with many more on that side; and Elias Hicks, Priscilla Hunt, and many others of the like mind, arranged in the galleries. As I sat at some distance, in the opposite range, and a secret cry was raised that the Lord would be with and support his own, Anna commenced speaking, and had continued for some time, when I observed Richard Mott leave his seat, and go out. After a little time, Willet Hicks also withdrew; about which time, a confusion arose near the front door. On turning my head, I saw a number of men rise, at which I supposed some alarming indisposition had happened to Richard. Anna, who was still on her feet, requested the people to be calm; but the confusion increased, with a cry of fire. I did not feel alarmed, though the women all around me were risen, till a louder cry ensued, and a voice vehemently exclaimed, "Why don't they

come out?" while other voices echoed, "The building is falling." This moment evinced the inherent impulse of the heart for self-preservation, and I hastily moved toward one of the doors; and getting wedged into the crowd, I was pushed in great measure along, till fairly out, without the least harm, while many others were sorely bruised; some, falling down, were trampled on the stairs; but none that I have heard of were dangerously hurt, though the escapes of some were very providential. Many affrighted, were ready to jump out of the windows, in the upper story; some fainting, others screaming—that the scene was truly awful, nor can it be described. It appears the building was not thought, by many, to be sufficiently supported in the basement story; that being new, and having never been tried with such a weight before, some were actually restrained from going to meeting for fear. A number of seats being wanted to fill up the passages, the friends, on going below for benches, became alarmed at the cracking of the timbers, and one of them refused to enter again. Being thus alarmed, and at a loss how to act, Richard Mott was called out, and requested to return and break up the meeting; but on viewing the danger it seemed unsafe to re-enter; but going to one of the doors, he requested those to come out who sat on the failing part. Supposing the report of the circumstance might reach thee in an alarming shape, some other way, I thought

best to give it thee in the way I saw, felt, and received it from good authority. * * *

* * * Feeling an important necessity of having my mind redeemed from all created things, and centred in the Lord alone, I commit you all to his care, with a renewed belief, that to the soul thus given up, all will be well, and an humble desire that He will be with thee, the dear children, and all my dear friends, no less than with my own soul, to keep us in His holy fear, and a watchful care not to offend against His righteous law, as made known in the secret of our hearts. M. S.

LETTER XXXVI.

New-York, 6th mo. 1, 1824.

DEAR CHARLES :

After enduring a trying conflict, I have been favored to arise as out of the pit, and to feel something like singing on the banks of deliverance; and then could I feelingly say, how good it is to be faithful. It is indeed, I fully believe, as I think I wrote thee before, the source of all my difficulties—this faithless fear of man, which arises from want of faith in the Creator; for I can say that when my mind is given up, and the eye thereof steadily fixed on the great First Cause, all outward barriers diminish, and I am borne as on eagle's wings, above the contending elements of affection, fear or envy. But when I give way to the two first of those passions, (for

the last, if I know my own heart, I am not tried with often,) it brings a kind of veil over me, that I seem to see every one's hand against me, and that my hand, or rather my views, are against every one; and thus the very thing that I feel desirous to avoid, comes upon me. This morning I attended Monthly-meeting, and was favored to bear my testimony to the truth, and also to supplicate the support and direction of the divine Power, in all of which I found that support; and through the mercy of the Lord, I feel there is a reality in these things. But, dear friends, one and all, if there is a spark of pride in any of your hearts, as to my name amongst men, strive to have it done away; for the right way of the Lord, as manifested to my mind, is evil spoken of here; and to be faithful unto him, I must hazard the censure of man. I feel desirous that thou in particular shouldst be enabled to see the wisdom of Providence in these things, and become reconciled in thy mind thereto. I have been favored with entire calmness of mind, as respects my family, though perhaps I never knew the preciousness of their preservation more. Not seeing the way open to proceed, I am likely to continue here yet longer. M. S.

LETTER XXXVII.

New-York, 6th mo. 8, 1824.

DEAR CHARLES:

Yesterday I visited a colored man in prison, who is condemned to be executed on Sixth-day

next. I, with a pious methodist, who had visited him a number of times, spent perhaps an hour and a half with him. He expressed an anxious desire to leave a world of which he is weary; compared the situation of his mind two months since, when he was running at large, with his present condition; the latter being far preferable. In short, there was a calm to be felt in his room, that I almost regretted to leave. While I sat there, I was somewhat overcome with a reproof in mind, for not persevering to visit Johnson, who was in the same prison, under the same sentence, when I was in New-York in Third month last; having felt the same inclination thereto which drew me to the present interview, but through human weakness, gave way, without making the least attempt to accomplish what might have been a memorable lesson to myself, as also to many others. I am renewedly persuaded in my own mind, that there is the most presumptuous degradation offered to the divine character, by finite man, in spending much time and breath in deploring the situation, and drawing conclusions from the actions, of what is considered the depraved part of mankind;—a weakness which can never be more beautifully and emphatically reproved, than it was by the Saviour, when the woman taken in adultery was presented before him. If we would always bring our own actions to the light, and compare our faithfulness with the measure received, and then draw a comparison between our merits and divine mercy, it

seems to me the best amongst us would not be able to accuse a brother. I have little more to write. I leave George to give the particulars of my setting out for New Bedford. I have thought sometimes of giving thee some details of the transactions of the day, as to what is called order, religion, and propriety; but feeling anxious above all things to be established on that rock which cannot be moved, I pass them by, and can say to those who persecute the servants of the Lord, "Forgive them; they know not what they do." I have abundant cause to rejoice in all things that are meted out to me, and especially so in that which is hard to flesh and blood. Once more I commend thee, and all my dearest of beloveds, to that Providence which has never failed or deceived me, and remain thy affectionate wife.

M. S.

LETTER XXXVIII.

New-York, 7th mo. 11, 1824.

DEAR CHARLES :

I will return to where I closed my last letter,* and inform thee that I remained at New Bedford till the 6th instant. My time was employed in visiting the children of Faith—those who see the necessity of leaving all outward dependence, and relying on the internal light for direction; one of which was Experience Sherman, upwards of seventy years of age. I attended a meeting

* This letter, with some others, has been lost.

in the old Quaker meeting-house, on Second-day evening at six o'clock. It was a precious parting scene with those who are banded together in love. Moses Howe, a minister of the Christian Society, was one with us; and notwithstanding the commotion of the day, it being Fourth of July, it was remarkably quiet, both within and without. Third-day morning, left my friends in the same feeling of cheerful friendship that we met, and came with Thomas Arnold to his house in North Providence. He is another instance in advanced life, of looking beyond the forms that enthralled his earlier days, into the living substance. I remained in the neighborhood until Seventh-day, visiting a number of Friends who had come to a measure of the same experience, among whom were two daughters and a son of Job Scott. I visited the latter at the old homestead of his father. In the afternoon, James Scott conveyed me to the steamboat; and, leaving all the dear friends I had found in that land, with the peaceful evidence, that though separated in person, our spirits were mingled together in the one great Source of Love, I had nothing to do with the past, and nothing to fear from the future, but simply to dwell in the present moment. After suffering much from sea-sickness, with most of the female passengers, we all got asleep, and were thankful to meet a beautiful morning again in the world. By raising my head from the pillow, I could see the sun rising in all his splendid pomp out of the sea; and though our progress

through the night had been very rapid, owing to detention at New Haven we did not get up to New-York till after eight o'clock in the evening. We had a full view of that tremendous gulf called Hurlgate, which we passed with considerable exertion, a little before sunset; the rocks, from the state of the tide, being but about eight feet under water. I cannot give thee an idea of the rolling and foaming convulsions that were seen on the surface, and for a long distance on either side, with numerous whirlpools, like boiling cauldrons, continually presenting to the eye the wonders of nature.

* * * But in this, as well as every thing else, I feel that resignation to the divine will, which I have long been striving for; and this has sustained my mind amid the fluctuating scenes I have passed through in this visit. It really rejoiced me to hear Frederick Plummer had been to see thee; and I hope I shall ever rejoice to know that the servants of the Lord can find reception in thy heart and house; for I have much to be thankful for to Him who provides for the ravens, in opening my way with those to whom I was personally a stranger. Commending you all to the grace of God, and His protection, I bid you farewell. M. S.

LETTER XXXIX.

New Bedford, 8th mo. 29, 1824.

DEAR HUSBAND:

* * * On visiting a family living near the beach, I was desirous to go to it, which I did,

and felt a renewed awe on observing the breakers rising in continual succession to a certain height, then foaming like the fall of a mighty cataract, and rolling in to the very edge. Wonderful, indeed, appeared to me that wonder in creation, the stupendous ocean! Nor less to be admired is the capacious mind of man, calculated for improvement to the highest degree, even so as to comprehend the vast designs of Omnipotence, and trace in those outward evidences thereof, the more minute arrangement of its internal texture. I am more and more convinced there never was nor ever will be a man, who, through the whole course of life, ever disbelieved in the existence of a God, and the revelation of his own pure spirit in the heart. Will not all confess there must be a first cause, a moving principle, which man, as a mere animal, cannot comprehend; that there are but two spirits—light and darkness, good and evil; that all good must flow from the Source of good, and consequently, all evil from its own source.

I went alone to Lynn meeting on First-day morning, and sat in silence, a spectator of the perverted order of things there; but it was no more to me than it would have been to have seen the same transactions in any other place. All kind of solemnity, as to a meeting of public worship, having fled, it seemed more like a house of correction; for though there were no blows, nor outward violence, there were ten or twelve persons rose in succession to silence M. Alley

from speaking, which she bore with undaunted patience and meek submission, and at length left the house. I went again in the afternoon, but did not stay through their ceremonies. I can make no calculation as to getting home, but it certainly will not be for some time yet, unless I feel turned from the fulfilment of my first prospects, which, with every thing else, I leave to the Lord. I believe the time has fully come, when those who do not go forward will go backward; and I felt a little anxious, at times, thou should not be one of that number. But I see more and more clearly, I must give all up, and be willing for the Lord to work in his own way. I have seen it was best for me that I came in the way I did; that my so doing may strengthen those who are trusting in the wisdom from above, and its directions; for herein it is manifested to be all-sufficient for those who will believe; and those who will not, I have nothing more to do with than simply to show by a line of conduct that their standard will not do for me. M. S.

LETTER XL.

West Grove, 9th mo. 20, 1824.

DEAR HUSBAND:

* * * * I do not feel the spring of action for writing much, and therefore I desire thou and all our friends may seek to become settled in that faith and assurance which will support the soul in all its trials; and though

every avenue of human consolation is obstructed, a union and communion with the Creator, and a communion with the saints in light, will be known and felt, affording joy and consolation that the world knows not of, and as it does not give, it cannot take away. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER XLI.

Philadelphia, 10th mo. 8, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * When I shall be ready to leave this, I know not; but feel at present ready to move in any direction the Lord shall open the way. I feel more and more released from all Society care or sectarian notions; and that very law in which I have been educated, and the creed which I have subscribed to, are no more to me than a mere mess of pottage, for which I hope I shall never sell a birthright in the truth. I had much satisfaction with cousin J. W., whose sentiments so entirely coincide with my own, in all things with regard to religion, that he was as a brother in the truth. Some of my other connexions, to whom I had before felt nearly united, did not feel so now; and some others, from whom I expected to meet with coldness and rebuke, were much more free and open than heretofore. Thus was I a little disappointed on all sides; but thanks to the Dispenser of all good, these things are of minor importance to me. Knowing I

must be weaned from the love of them all, I care not how soon they are taken away, even all those things in which my soul delighteth after the flesh. I have been at Twelfth-street and Arch-street meetings, where I spoke without interruption. Last evening had a free, precious meeting with the Christians, at their meeting-house.

I omitted to tell thee that the day before I left home, I attended our week-day meeting, and was relieved from a burthen, by testifying the truth in plain terms, which raised the spirit of opposition in some of the rulers; but I was raised above all, in that power which is over all. May the God of all comfort be thy consolation, is the prayer of thy sister. M. S.

LETTER XLII.

Plumstead, 10th mo. 19, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER:

We received thine of the 12th, this day, and are much obliged for thy intelligence of the state of affairs with you. I rejoice at every instance of open display of Anti-christian spirit in this day; for so sure as it does exist, so sure it must be destroyed; and it will not fall till its measure of iniquity is full. Therefore, seeing that things in their very nature must operate in this way, well may those rejoice therein who have no lot nor portion in the present inheritance. I heard the printed letter of E. H., with its preface, the night before I left the city; but that of A. B. I

have not heard. These must certainly cause an additional excitement, and carry conviction to some that seem determined not to believe there is any real disunity among the great heads, so called; or at least not to seem to acknowledge it to some of the lesser branches of the house. I have been at meeting at Solebury to-day, where I had a comfortable time, and was treated with great freedom and kindness, except by a few elderites. We are looking a little for Frederick Plummer to-morrow. He is to be at Addisville on Sixth-day evening, and if mother is so that I can leave her, I intend going down. There is an openness for the truth in some of those outskirts amongst mankind, that I do not find among the honorables in high profession. I have understood some of our most liberal ones have declaimed loudly against T. W.'s little treatise, or address, and suppose it came from H. Barton's cabinet. Poor New-lights! so called, how will all classes join, as it were with one consent, to stigmatise and condemn you. But if the Lord is on your side, it matters not. Our creation having been for a purpose of God's glory, the greater the trials and difficulties we have to encounter, so much more will that glory be made manifest; because nothing but the arm of the Lord, which is His ability, vouchsafed to man, will bear the soul through and over all opposition; and therefore the greater the opposition, so much more conspicuous will be the power that can withstand it. It was the will of God that

Israel should be delivered from bondage by a small band, led on by Gideon, so that the people might have no cause to glory, save in him alone; and thus, through mighty hosts of enemies, both in an individual and society capacity, this little band or seed, even that which has obtained victory with God, will be the redeemer from carnal captivity.

Please remember me to those friends who are honestly disposed, and do not turn away with every breeze of air that blows from the adverse quarter.

M. S.

LETTER XLIII.

Philadelphia, 11th mo. 1, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER:

I felt much interested in the contents of thy last. Every event that now takes place (of any consequence,) is fraught with instruction to an eye of Faith; and I seem to trace with peculiar interest, the sometimes slow, but not less certain steps, and sometimes rapid strides, of Anti-christian intrigue and intolerance, that must yet be multiplied, as the plagues of Egypt were, before the measure will be completely filled up, and man will see and acknowledge that it is the mighty power of the living God that is displaying itself in these things. It is a great and important epoch in this world, in which mankind universally, in a more direct or remote degree, are deeply interested. A long, laborious and

proving struggle has commenced, between the powers of earth and Heaven. All that has yet taken place is but the beginning of sorrows. As man is disturbed and driven from one refuge, he flies to another, but the Lord alone will be found to be a safe refuge in the day of trial that is certainly progressing. Every prop and support but those of His power will be taken away ; parents and children, brethren and sisters, husbands and wives, rent asunder. I can but marvel at and magnify the goodness of the Lord, for the deliverance I have experienced, in the calmness and confidence with which I see and contemplate those passing and approaching events ; though I often feel as if the few trials I have yet experienced, may be nothing in comparison with those in store for me. Confiding in that power which has brought me thus far, I have no reason to doubt its sufficiency for the time to come. I was at Green-street and North meetings yesterday, where I spoke without public opposition. I attended the Christian meeting last evening, and a heart-tendering time it was to those who can rejoice in the Lord, whose goodness and mercy were magnified and commended by many voices, both in testimony and spiritual songs. This day is the Quarterly-meeting in the city, which I am going to attend. I have some other places of social worship in view, and know not when I shall leave the place. My lodging is at our kind friend Benedict Dorsey's.

THIRD-DAY, THE 2D.—I attended Quarterly-meeting, and was raised so far above all fear but the true fear, that I fulfilled my duty in plain terms, and came off victorious. It was a solemn, quiet meeting. It appears to me that the mist of tradition hangs like a veil before the eyes of our Orthodox friends, and they mistake this Society for the chosen people, and the order thereof for the mind of Truth. And no marvel that, thus blinded, they should seek zealously to maintain the cause thereof; but what is generally termed the Orthodoxy, are not alone in these things; nay, almost all, especially of the active part, are thus blinded. They had a warm debate yesterday, in the men's Quarterly-meeting, concerning the transactions of Green-street meeting, with regard to those two elders who opposed E. H. so particularly when here. No doubt a statement of the debate will be sent on to New-York. These things go to confirm my mind of their necessity, in the pulling down of those mighty fabrics, the systems of men, that now stand in the way of the building of a pure, spiritual church on earth. I spent last evening at the house of a friend, in company with F. Plummer and wife, with a few others, where brotherly love flowed sweetly, as from vessel to vessel, and we were mutually comforted and encouraged to trust in the Lord, by whose "grace we could say we are what we are."

6TH OF THE MONTH.—I went in company with some of the brethren, last Fourth-day, down the

river, thirteen miles, where we had an evening meeting among the Christians. Next day, attended the week-day meeting at Darby. The sweet impressions of life, liberty and love, experienced among a free, seeking people, the night before, had not left me, and after sitting some time under it, I arose to speak from this text: "How good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." But no sooner had I repeated the text, than a damp came over my feelings, and though I went on to show how this unity was to be kept up, and love amongst brethren preserved, which was by all living in subjection to the will and mind of the Parent, all I said seemed to come back to my own bosom, and without continuing as the opening appeared before I arose, I sat down. A man then spoke concerning the blessed state of the righteous. After he sat down, a move was made to break the meeting, but not acceded to; and after some time F. Plummer arose, with a kind of apology for this text: "He that hath a dream," &c. He went on deliberately to show the gospel privilege of all, to declare those things that were made known to them, and also that it was our privilege to distinguish betwixt the wheat and the chaff, betwixt a dream and a reality. There was a solemnity and firmness in his expression; and though, I doubt not, some endeavored to brave themselves against its effects, I think they could not get over the truth of what he said, nor the authority in which he spoke it,

in any other way than the determinate idea that none but Quakers speak from the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. After meeting, Frederick was invited to dine with some of the great heads of the meeting, and as I stood by, I was also included. I felt more like dining with an humble-looking sister, where we left our horse, but yielded to the solicitation of my friend, and we all went to the great house. They soon attacked I. S. on the old score of not being a member, and the great danger of standing without the pale. He meekly bore it all, without much reply, only expressing the peace he had experienced since his disownment. They next attacked Frederick, in a very pleasant and free manner, which he bore and rallied with all the ease and Christian sweetness of an upright mind; but as he afterwards observed, he thought they were whipping others over his back. I believe it was so, and that in fact, I was the object of their chastisement. After leaving there, we spent an hour in the forementioned place, and then came into town. I am now waiting to be bidden, or see the Master's motion. I could wish that it were liberty of conscience, and freedom in the truth, that the two great parties were contending for, instead of certain rules and points of doctrine; for if they split upon these, each party will still have their traditions. Yet I hope some will escape through the split, and come out clear; but they must, that is, they will, contend about these things, while they think them of so much consequence. M. S.

LETTER XLIV.

Millville, Columbia Co. N. Y., 2d mo. 2, 1825.

DEAR CHARLES :

After finishing my last letter to thee on the 31st ult., I mused a good deal on returning homeward, and in company with my friends J. C. Dean and S. Dean, have visited a number of places; among others, Hudson, where we arrived at two o'clock. Called at Peter Barnard's, and spent two hours, during which time we were attentively listening to his wife, Hannah, as she related many things that transpired when she was in England, with the proceedings of Society against her, to her final expulsion therefrom. I forbear to make any remarks upon these things, knowing that the pen cannot do justice thereto; that minds hedged in on all sides by traditional notions of religion, cannot comprehend the secret workings of Christ or Anti-christ; and also that when the mind is illuminated by an eye of faith in the great First Cause, His operations will be seen and traced with silent admiration and humble reverence, far beyond what written testimonials can inspire.

And now I may state, in regard to what I have written of occurrences concerning myself, since I left my habitation, that it has been entirely uninteresting to me; but as thou and my particular friends might be anxious to hear something of my getting along, I have done it, and the broken manner in which I have written, may speak for

me in that respect; for it is quite a task for me to write. Feeling as I do the great commotions among men, I am glad to retire within the quiet of my own mind, at all possible seasons, simply doing what I feel to be my religious duty, from time to time, and commit the event, both as to myself and others, into the hands of an all-wise disposer of events, a reliance on whose overruling providence, mercy and justice, continues to be the stay and support of my soul, my hope of preservation and restorer of all things, even every thing that is best for me. Unto this never-failing source of peace and happiness I commend all whom I love, which are not only thou, my dear children, parents, brethren and sisters, after the flesh, but the whole human race. And I have no doubt that the way and manner would be pointed out to all, if there was attention given to Christ knocking at the heart, and he was permitted to come in and reign there. But these knocks are so often disregarded, often not even noticed, from the multitude of other cares that occupy the mind, insomuch that the heavenly visitor waits long, often repeating his knocks; yet man does not realise the favor; and those invitations of love tend rather to frustrate than promote his happiness, because they interrupt his dreams of earthly felicity. I had come to a conclusion to return home, and my affectionate feelings wrought strongly to that effect, but having arrived at Coxsackie, my determination began to waver, and my mind again felt at home

in a strange land. I can therefore do no less than avail myself of the present opportunity of doing whatsoever the Master may point out to me, not only in this lamentably degenerate Society, but also among others, not of this fold.

It appears there will be no difficulty in getting around to a number of meetings, and a Friend kindly offers to conduct me back, when ready, as far or further than Pleasant Valley. I had no expectation of going on into Canada, unless thou shouldst see thy way to accompany me; and if so, being as I was thus far on the way, and finding there were friends of the truth in its simplicity, scattered pretty well on in that direction, it might be attended with less difficulty to continue on, than to return and have to go there next summer. But as I said in a former letter, as there are no impossibilities required, I feel resigned, and trust all will work together for good.

M. S.

LETTER XLV.

Plumstead, 3d mo. 15, 1825.

DEAR BROTHER:

We got safe to J. Shotwell's the same evening after parting with thee; met a kind welcome; left early next morning, and without any difficulty except bad roads, reached Joseph Reeder's, on this side New Hope, before nine o'clock at night. Fifth-day, went from thence to the Quarterly-meeting. There was but little testimony

borne, and that on the female side. The business went on in the same round of formality as usual, and but few seemed to feel interest enough to give a sentiment. But a subject of deep interest occupied the brethren for some time. It was carried up from Middletown Monthly-meeting;—a proposal to alter the discipline with respect to appointments to stations in the church, so called, that none be made for term of life: a measure which, if carried into effect, will abolish the dignity of a certain order, who now claim the honor of “pillars that go no more out.” It had been tried several times before, and had always been pushed out of doors by some kind of stratagem; but it passed now, through all the opposition of honorables and right-honorables that arose. Having succeeded in getting it on the minutes, they say the motion for carrying it up to the Yearly-meeting passed by a great odds. After the meeting closed, one of the Buckingham elders came to me, and after the usual salutation, asked if I was willing to see some of them. I freely told her yes. She queried when I would be at home, or if I would meet them at the meeting-house. I replied, I could not tell when I should be at home, but for aught I knew, should be at the next Monthly-meeting. The next First-day was very stormy, and very few were collected at meeting. I was led to draw a comparison between our zeal and that of the Mahometans; they going once in a year to pay their devotions to the tomb of their

prophet ; and we going diligently twice in the week, at a set hour in the day, to a certain place, to perform what we call worship, to a Being who is every where present. I carried the analogy pretty far. After meeting broke, one of the elders let me know she did not think well of my setting their zeal in coming there through the storm at nought. I told her, if we came there in the right spirit, these things would not hurt us. The subject brightened so with me after this, that on the succeeding meeting day, I added another testimony of like import to this. It being a Preparative-meeting, the case of an applicant for membership was brought up from the preceding Preparative-meeting. I had understood that the book of Discipline had been handed to the person ; which I mentioned, setting forth the inconsistency of such an act, and also what the discipline (according to Penn) was for, and that if we made any thing more of it than a mere regulator of outward order, it became a creed, or confession of faith. The query was put, whether she was going to conform, and one of the committee who had visited her, answered that she said she would try. This was such a blow to my feelings, that I told them they had made it a creed right out, and I did not know who could have the face to require a conformity from her, seeing we did not live up to it ourselves, with a great deal more to the same effect. It is really admirable how fast they are going into the letter, and how blind they are as to the spirit.

I am quite sick of these things. Well, I went to Monthly-meeting. Things went on about as usual. It broke up. Not one of them mentioned the proposed interview, (though the select band seemed to be arranging something,) till the people nearly all left the place, and we had concluded to go; when, accidentally it seemed to be mentioned they were all coming up the next day, in order to fulfil a string of appointments about Plumstead, and to see me in the way. Charles and myself had started for a week's tour to the different meetings, and were then on our way to Solebury. They were pretty peremptory that we should wait on them next day; and finding us bent on pursuing our own plan, they proposed the present time. I told them I was now at their command; and so we went into the meeting-house, where we sat in conference for two hours, at least. Charles was permitted to be present, and there were nine elders. Why the other three were not there, I do not know. The subject was opened as being the subject of concern, my going about as I did, and mixing with the people of the world, attending other meetings, and not taking the advice of my friends. I asked an explanation of the words—"world's people;" when it was answered, Frederick Plummer, and attending his meetings. I told them the spiritually minded, let them be of what name or denomination they may, are the people I wished to associate with; that I believed they, and they only, made up the militant church;

and that we, that is our Society, were not the Lord's peculiar people ; that as to taking the advice of Friends, I had acted agreeably to what I believed to be the dictates of truth. It would take more time and a more retentive memory than I have, to pen down all that was said. The string they harped most on, was my not taking the advice of Friends. One said she had felt a great deal for me and my little children ; that if I would stay with *them* more, it would be a great satisfaction to her, at least. I replied, I could not see that my doing wrong would yield any solid satisfaction to any one. "O, to be sure, not doing wrong ; but they did not think it would be wrong to take their advice." I asked if it would be right to take advice contrary to the convictions of my own mind. "Why no," one seemed to think not ; but he talked as though I was deceived ; that I was going astray. Well, they would tell of such an one, who cast his burthen on his Friends, and it became too heavy for them, and they were glad to let him go. I told him I supposed we might recount instances of that kind from morning till night, and I did not doubt they were right in so doing ; but I had never believed in such a system for myself ; that it was like the Papist priests undertaking to forgive sins, for a set of people to release individuals from their religious duty. At length one was tired, and another thought we should get into disorder ; and so one proposed for Charles and myself to withdraw. Therefore we left

them ; and though they had made many professions of love in the affair, not one of them gave us the hand.

Thus I have given thee a sketch of an interview that has very much strengthened my desire of being permitted to retire from the contested ground. * * * We have not heard what conclusion they came to among themselves, and I do not feel anxious about it ; for the least especial favor of Society operates as a bribe to my will, that I continually fear the consequences of. The circulators of the pamphlets have certainly succeeded in their intentions, in some measure, among the unsuspecting and ignorant, insomuch that Elias Hicks's doctrine is now denounced by some that once united with him ; and I understand that a volume of extracts from our ancient authors is shortly to come out, in opposition to those we saw in New-York ; and it is said others are going to set Fox, Penn and others to clashing in their own writings. I also understand that the contest is going on in Philadelphia. E. Hicks' sermons have come out, and a counsel has been held concerning them by North-meeting elders. They have come into several neighborhoods where we were last week.

M. S.

LETTER XLVI.

Plumstead, 4th mo. 3, 1825.

DEAR BROTHER :

A prospect of private conveyance by J. C., who takes New-York on the way of his removal to Rochester, induces me to address thee again, though nothing interesting has occurred to inform thee of since my last. I have been mostly at home, and though I do not feel it to be my proper place, yet I seem to submit implicitly to circumstances. Have attended meeting once, and that to no purpose that I know of, save a more perfect conviction that none but those who carry the sectarian badge, "the mark of the beast," will be permitted to buy or sell in the populous streets of spiritual Babylon, in this day, as in all others. The uppermost seats, or those who fill them, standing sentinels to guard the avenues, so that no entrance be made, and no encroachment on their supposed privileges pass their eagle watch. I recoil from the deceptive scene with feelings of heart-sick disgust, and if I dare ask terms of my God, it would be to withdraw forever therefrom. Such blindness, bigotry and formality combined, the first of which may plead an excuse for the two last; but really it seems astonishing so much of them should exist at the present day. One of the elders queried with me a short time since, whether her information that I had had a meeting at Tullytown was true. I gave her the circumstance, and said they might call it what they

would, and make of it just what they pleased. If I had been at the theatre, she need not have made more lamentation about it. I claimed liberty of conscience, and she brought up the old song of delusion. I requested her to look back to the beginning among Friends, and was going to direct her attention to the manner in which they were treated, for deviating from the established worship; but she interrupted me by saying, "I have been reading how George Fox used to run about almost as bad as thee; but then," she continued, "I was not about to say he was not right." I asked her if she believed I would have had that meeting, if I did not think it was right. She said, she did not; but asked if there was not such a thing as delusion. In such cases, I often feel as if my hands were tied; for when people deny the fundamental principles of religion, viz: the light within, and the certain evidence thereof, they have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear anything beyond what custom has established; and like the Jews of old, they make void the law of God through the traditions of men. It is therefore like casting pearls before swine, to talk of anything like acting in simple faith. Well, seeing she had begun the subject, I asked her if our late interview had afforded them any satisfaction. Why, she said, she believed it was the united opinion of them all (meaning, I suppose, those who had sat in council, of which I gave thee an account in my last letter,) that I ought to take the advice

of my friends. "Who are my friends," said I. "All of us; I am thy friend." "Thou art not my friend, if thou art not willing I should do right." "I am willing thee should do so." Here we entered the door, and the conversation was discontinued for the present time. Since that time, I paid a friendly visit to one of our neighbors, an overseer. We spent the afternoon in conversation on various subjects; but on coming away, she walked with me, and after a considerable time, she said, "I suppose thou knows we did not answer our queries clear, last time?" "No, I did not know but you answered them as usual. I did not notice any difference in them." She then stated, in a rather incoherent manner, why they did not; and as I felt considerable freedom, I exercised it, and with keeping up the subject, she came home with me; and having staid awhile, I accompanied her back again part of the way, and talked some more on the subject. At length we parted; she making several professions of love; and I told her that when I did right, I felt to love every body, but when I did not, I could not feel that love; that it was something which could be easily spoken, but to feel it, was better than words. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER XLVII.

Plumstead, 1st mo. 22, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER :

I seem to feel bound yet to exercise the pen, occasionally. And perhaps thou mayest desire to hear the conclusion of our late journey. Having given thee a detail as far as Baltimore, I need only go back thus far. I mentioned in my last letter, we should get home in three weeks from that date ; but my companion became so anxious to reach it, that I left Baltimore with a burthen that increased at every step we took, for several days. My proneness to shudder at the cross, induced me to look for a short stay in that city. But the longer we remained there, the more I saw a way open for social intercourse with some friends, and therefore that social love that binds man to his fellow man rose above the cowardly spirit of the creature, and seemed to veil the cross, in measure, by faith and hope. It may seem strange that social motives should lead to protract a visit commenced upon what is called religious motives. But my views have often been turned to that kind of usefulness, and I believe the daily walk of the humble Christian, in that way, might be more beneficial to mankind, than the most sanctionious crusades through a country by those who preach one thing, and yet require their hearers to do another. We, as a people, have become so attached to certain phrases, that seem

to denote a special mission, that anything without that seal will not pass current at all.

M. S.

LETTER XLVIII.

Philadelphia, 2d mo. 14, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER:

I now avail myself of leisure to address thee, in answer to two former letters, by which I was much gratified. The queries of the first, adverted to in the latter, respecting our friends in Chester county, I think were answered as to the subject, in my last to thee. Cousin J. W. has clear views, and appears to be living up to them, in defiance of those shackles which Society has placed upon him. Cousin A. P. had been much enlarged in the ministerial line, for some time previous to our visit in the neighborhood. In contemplating the various dispensations of Providence to the children of men, I am sometimes lost in astonishment at the ways and means he makes use of.

With regard to myself and the authorities of our meeting, there is little to be said. I went to meeting the next day after we got home from our western tour, and finding the same lethargic spirit as formerly, I expressed my feelings and left them; nor did I go to meeting again until the two preceding Fifth-days to my leaving home, which was on the fourth of this month. I do not know that any body troubled them-

selves much about my staying at home. But a few weeks since there were two different persons in the neighborhood, appointing meetings. One was a Freewill Baptist, the other a Presbyterian, and a number of us attended these meetings, which caused a considerable stir. One of the overseers visited Charles on the subject. The female overseers, less candid, but more officious, carried their concern to the Preparative-meeting, stating in the answer to the query on Hireling Ministry, that we were generally clear. I was present, and we had the subject canvassed pretty well, and though I stated plainly that the person they had in view professed to be conscientious against taking pay for preaching, after cavilling some time about it, they concluded it was a safe answer, because it stated they were generally clear. I then told them, I considered myself as clear as the clearest of them; that I bore a testimony against an hireling ministry of any kind, whether it was paid for in money, in applause, or approbation of men. I came away before the Monthly-meeting, but I think I shall be at the Quarterly, to defend the cause, if the Lord permit. It is probable they consider my example, if it has any weight, a very pernicious one; and it appears to be the prevailing sentiment throughout the Society, to tighten the cords of the discipline; thus wasting the little strength that remains, in trying to mend others; not coming home to the cultivation of that heavenly seed, which is cha-

riety, which suffereth long, and is not easily provoked. A disinterested beholder can see this is too much the case, on either side; that both are equally supporting the authority of a discipline, which deserves just as much the title of spiritual, as good, wholesome civil laws do. The only difference is, that one party would place the power in a few, the other, in many; and of the two, if truth must be circumscribed by any thing but its own bounds, the fewer perhaps the better, as many voices make confusion. I attended the Quarterly-meeting in the city, and also all the different meetings of the Society. I have had liberty in speaking in them all; I have also found freedom amongst the little circle of friends that I have here; but the greatest cause I have to rejoice in is, that I feel my mind more and more unshackled from human ties. Even that fond attachment of friendship I once had for particular individuals, has mostly subsided into a general feeling of love to mankind, and the pleasing subject of meditation on the goodness and mercy of God. In company, often, I feel no disposition to converse; for those who understand the language of the spirit of love, can feel it, and those that do not, cannot comprehend it, though you say ever so much. I have had satisfaction in attending the Christian meeting; but I think the source of satisfaction in these things is the meeting of my fellow mortals on the broad scale of universal acceptance, according to their works, where, as the pious Blair expresses himself, on

devotion, "worldly distinctions cease, and worldly cares are forgotten." The contracted chains of sectarianism, when fastened on the mind, are galling to the last degree. It seems as if they had, in some sort, the same effect on the mind that a tight-drawn cord has on the animal flesh, to deaden it, so that in a state of deep suffering it is scarcely sensible of feeling at all. M. S.

LETTER XLIX.

Plumstead, 3d mo. 5, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER :

As I suppose thee to have received a letter written in Philadelphia, I will go back a little to inform thee of the remainder of my stay in the city. The same evening, after writing, at the house of F. P.'s father, it was a favored season with a few who appeared to be devoted to Christ, or seeking to become his followers. The next day I called on some of my acquaintance, and returned to my lodgings, at our kind friend B. Dorsey's. Fifth-day, I wrote letters to Indiana; a merchant from Richmond being in town, by whom I sent them. Spent the afternoon at Abraham Lower's, in company with his wife; himself not at home; he being gone to some of the Quarterly-meetings in Chester county, partly on a social visit. My heart rejoices at the necessity some of them find themselves under, to go without the customary appendages of honor. And my soul hails with joy the day in prospect, when

these things will be seen in their true colors, to belong to the beast and his kingdom, and when even among a people who have so far backsliden as the Society who call themselves Friends. The mighty power of the Highest will operate so effectually as to cause them to trample under foot those imposing rules that bind the conscience, and aspire to force the homage of the heart. Glory to God and the Lamb forever ! they will have the victory in the end. Sixth-day, I visited some others of my friends, and in the evening attended a meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Joint Interest and Happiness ; the principles of which are not new to me, but have been the subject of thought at different times since I became interested in the cause of righteousness. And I cannot believe otherwise than that when the apostolic faith comes into operation completely, the apostolic order of things must be restored. Individual interest can have no place in the heart, when love to our neighbor is equal to that of ourselves. But when, or by what means all this is to be brought about, I know not ; and if — is an instrument in the Divine hand, to bring about this state of things, the work, no doubt, will prosper ; but all the works of man, *as man*, will never do it. It must be by and through the efficacious works of divine grace in the heart, modifying the stern will of man, and bringing it into the obedience that was in Christ. Seventh-day, I came home, and found the children and our parents in pretty good

health. The Fifth-day following, attended the Quarterly-meeting at Wrightstown. In getting through the queries and answers, one of our elders was very much tried about our testimony, so called, respecting hireling ministry; but I found myself in some sort called upon to defend the case that I wrote thee about in my last, and the answer went quite clear to the Yearly-meeting. But that elder's stubborn belief was not changed, and she told me after meeting, she thought it was not the truth. On our way home, we got thy letter dated First month 25th; by which it appears your department is in great commotion. But while I contemplate with a kind of mingled wonder and delight, those ominous fluctuations of the elements, I can find no language to paint my sensations, so well as by comparing it to a violent thunder storm, which, a little natural philosophy teaches us, tends to the purification of the atmosphere. Things seem to go on pretty much in the old way with us. We are too far from the scene of action to be very sensibly affected therewith; but I rather suppose the leaven is working, that will eventually leaven the whole lump. M. S.

LETTER L.

Buckingham, 6th mo. 6, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER:

With respect to my own concerns and adventures, I could write thee a volume, if I had

capacity ; but as I once told thee, I felt wearied with writing, and reading documents of events that occurred to me. I leave them to sink into oblivion, desiring neither to dwell nor feed upon the past, nor yet anxiously anticipate the future. The present moment is only mine ; it is therefore my proper business to employ it to advantage. All the occurrences that cross my path and thwart my will, teach me the necessity of faith and patience. The latter appears to me the most difficult to attain and retain, but perhaps the former is its true foundation, and if securely and permanently laid, would always support the latter. We have many lessons to learn, and in religious experience, as in all others, they become more difficult, that is, they require more intense study, as we progress, until we arrive to a perfect knowledge of them. Thus, in arithmetic, simple addition is soon calculated, but the compound rules puzzle the brain. Of this, thou understandest more than I do ; but I feel more than I can express or thou canst understand, save in thy own experience of the rules I meant to prefigure. The mind that is taught in the school of Christ, must be very attentive and diligent, or it will not keep pace with the Master's precepts. I believe I should feel a reward, if I was more willing to leave my home at the Master's call, but the cares of the world fetter me so much, that I begin almost to despair of ever becoming released therefrom. I find, to my sorrow, that the more I listen to the voice of the reasoner, the

more I become entangled ; and I can truly comprehend the state of mind figuratively spoken of in Adam : “ The woman thou gavest me beguiled me, and I did eat.” Whenever the good things of this life engross our affections, and draw them off from their proper object, then it is we feel the same excuse necessary, whether we are honest enough to confess it, or not. With regard to your Yearly-meeting, I do not know that I had any particular business there ; but if I could have brought my mind to leave all, and also to hazard and encounter all the world could take and give, I should have been there at the time. But Newport has been before me for some time past, and if the waves of despondency do not overwhelm me, or some yet unforeseen occurrence prevent, I expect to go there. I intend asking P. to accompany me, and if thee gets this in time, and has an opportunity, thee may mention it to her. M. S.

LETTER LI.

New-York, 6th mo. 10, 1826.

DEAR HUSBAND :

Under the dispensation of Divine Providence, it has once more become expedient to have recourse to this means of expressing my feelings to thee. My mind has been so entirely serene on the subject of my intended journey, that every thought and every reflection that arises

from doubt and carnal reasoning, is hushed into stillness,

“And not a wave of trouble rolls
Across my peaceful breast.”

My dear, dear children, for whom I feel the tenderest solicitude of a mother's love, I have resigned you once more and again to the protection of an all-wise, all-merciful Providence, whose faith has been my shield, from the first hour of my knowledge thereof; whose care has been my preservation, and will also be yours; whose wisdom has been my direction, and whose power has been my support. In that wisdom, and that power, had my natural life been called for, could I have resisted? Would the strong ties of maternal love, or those of filial tenderness, or conjugal attachment, have intercepted the final blow? Nay, verily, all these must have given way; and happy for that mind, which, at such a time, is brought to resign all, instead of being torn from them in anguish. Is it not, then, even more rational to believe that it is altogether possible and right for the same state of resignation to be attained to, in a temporary separation from the near and dear connexions in life. Whoever doubts this, must be weak in the faith, defective in the love, and an unbeliever in Christ, our redeemer and mediator with the Father. And though they may talk much about them, they are but lies in their mouth; for however we may persuade ourselves that we stand loose from the world and the attachments thereof;

that we are not loving the gifts more than the Giver, it is in the time of trial that we manifest, beyond all dispute, our true state of mind herein, and like the young man formerly, whether we will give up all to follow Christ, or turn again to these beloveds. And herein I can comprehend the dispensations of Providence to the children of men, according to their several states and conditions; that wherein our great possessions lie, we find our faith tried, and obedience proved.

M. S.

LETTER LII.

Newport, 6th mo. 12, 1826.

DEAR HUSBAND :

This morning the Yearly-meeting began. Our English friends had much to say at the opening of the meeting, both in preaching and praying. To me, it was all as cold as the walls that surrounded us. The pompous certificates were read, and much labored expression of unity. The deathly sleep that this meeting appears to have sunk into, is very striking; amidst which it is really painful to see the airs of sanctity that are put on. Let our friend R. E. try her best, I am certain she has had too much light on her understanding to reconcile all that passes here. I hope thou and the children will be preserved; and knowing the satisfaction of being with you to be forbidden, when duty to my great Master calls me away, I see, and have long seen, that

spiritual death must be the consequence of partaking thereof ; and that if my natural life should even be spared, which I have no reason to expect in that case, but rather that I should be cut off in the midst of my days ; that my spiritual life would be lost, and instead of *sweet*, bitter would ensue ; instead of enjoying that home, and your society, the mind, having lost its proper centre, would be tost with the tempest of contending passions ; and awfully to be feared is the event of such a conflict. If thou canst understand these things, I entreat thee to treasure them up, and not let them be lost. It has long been my firm belief that the blessing of Providence would rest upon us, if we are faithful to known duty. It has also been as firm, that blasting, in every sense of the word, would follow disobedience. I feel my mind so entirely staid on truth, in this my allotment, that I cannot realise how a written certificate can be a consolation, and especially at this time, when to say that one goes out in unity, is telling a downright falsehood, seeing the meetings are so divided in themselves.

M. S.

LETTER LIII.*Newport, R. I., 6th mo. 15, 1826.*

DEAR BROTHER:

Robert Pearsall, of your city, being about to return home, it occurred to me I could write thee by him. My last was dated, I think, the 12th,

in the evening. We had then attended two sittings of the Yearly-meeting. Some friends came to us as we were on the porch of the boarding-house, that evening, and told us it was the sense of the meeting that we should be silent among them, on which condition they had no objection to our sitting in their meetings. P. expressed her willingness to do so, if she could, with peace of mind. There was no meeting but the select one, on Third-day morning. In the afternoon we went again. I spake once, and to my relief. P. spake also. A great bustle agitated our boarding-house the next morning. Continual groups of Quakers and Quakeresses were seen whispering in one part or another. At length we were solemnly summoned into the passage, and our sentence delivered by a stout man; not with a sword girt by his side, but a sanctimonious, straight coat, in presence of two females. It was that we were not to go into the meeting-house, only upon promise to be silent. Deaf to all remonstrances, they urged the point with unyielding firmness, (if it deserves such a name.) At length he went out, and shortly after returned, bringing another, not so tall, though quite as muscular as himself. He had previously told us, that if we went in, and did speak, immediate information would be given, and he, himself, should be one to remove us. This latter one now told us he should assist in removing us. So that, as far as muscular strength could deter us, they tried the experiment. I felt not the least hesita-

tion from all their threats, nor the least wavering for all their arguments of pretended love, but kept my mind retired, so that I might know what to do. P., at length, though clear herself, took my arm, and we walked towards the meeting house. Before we proceeded far, she declined going, and I released her, and went on alone. The people had mostly gone in, but one, who seemed like a priestess among them, with a few others, were on the way, one of whom ran full speed toward our executioner, who was standing alone, about half way between the men's and women's door. He met her, and they stood perhaps a minute in consultation, by which time I had nearly reached the steps, but did not hasten in the least, as I had no idea of forcing my way. By a quickened pace, he intercepted my path, and peremptorily told me I must not go in. "What!" said I, "and this the house of the Lord!" He repeated the command, and I stood still before the door, which was closed. At length I sat down on the bench, and he on the step-stone; but, I suppose, not willing to lose the meeting, he opened the door, and called a female by name. They then fastened the door, and I heard the bolt grate on the inside. He now went in, and that I might feel myself clear, having gone as far as I could, I tried the latchet of both doors, which I could not raise. I then returned home. But, in the afternoon, it seemed best to try them again. I went earlier, was again met by the same man, and in full view of the gazing

multitude, forbidden to enter. Several females surrounded me, pleading that I would return. At length the man proposed that I should go in, if I would give my word that I would not speak. I replied, I could do no such thing. One Friend, with a tremulous voice, asked me if there was no other way that I could clear my mind. I told her I did not know of any, except speaking to the people in the street, which I had not yet felt myself called to. "Well," said she, "perhaps I have nothing to do with it." Another stood weeping by me a long time, but at length went in. I remained by the door most of the afternoon meeting, but left before it closed. This morning, after they had all left the house a considerable time, as I thought, it was with me to walk again to the house. The door was fast; but some others coming up just at that time, it was opened, and I walked in without opposition. I sat down on a bench in the passage. A young woman came to me, and asked me if I had not better go out. She sat by me, and appeared very apprehensive at every movement, that I was going to rise; but I sat a silent witness. I may just say, they are going to send on complaints to our meetings against us. With a mind perfectly composed as to the event of all things, I bid thee farewell.

M. S.

LETTER LIV.

New Bedford, Mass., 7th mo. 2, 1826.

MY DEAR CHARLES :

I received a letter this afternoon, written jointly by thyself and cousin Anne, the contents of which were very acceptable. And seeing you are all doing well, I conclude to go to Nantucket tomorrow, committing myself to the care of Providence. As P. has gone home, it has fallen to my lot to be left alone as to a steady companion ; but if it is necessary for my refinement to be led thus alone, all is well. I have found kind friends, and have had conveyance to all the different meetings that I have thought right to attend. I have been favored to dwell in patience, and have not experienced a lack of faith. Though I have thought much of the children and thyself, I have not been unduly anxious, but felt a secret hope you would do as well as if I was with you. *

* * * * * M. S.

FROM ELIZA ROTCH, JUN. TO CHARLES SMITH.

It may be agreeable to Charles Smith to hear from one who has lately shared largely in his wife's society, that she has been very acceptably among her New Bedford friends. Her walk appears to be that of a truly devoted child of the Father ; and the simplicity with which she follows the one only guide, regardless of the opinions of men, is truly edifying and delightful to

observe. The meekness of spirit with which she meets opposition, deprives it of its sting ; and the serene cheerfulness of her countenance clearly shows the peace that reigns within. When she has done all the duty that is required of her in these parts, she will doubtless return home, not only with the reward of peace, but with a renewed capacity for her domestic concerns, and a fresh interest in them ; for the more perfectly we stand in the will of God, the better we fulfil all the duties of life.

ELIZA ROTCH, JUN.

LETTER LV.

New Bedford, 7th mo. 4, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER :

Nothing material has occurred since my companion left me ; but having moved on in entire dedication of heart, feel entirely peaceful, thus far. I hope thou art endeavoring more and more after that state of mind wherein anxiety cannot dwell, but instead thereof a calm resignation and willingness that every thing may be done in the Lord's time. This attainment comes through patient perseverance in suffering of the creature, unto the end or swallowing up of the carnal will ; and to ourselves it is of infinite importance. *

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M. S.

LETTER LVI.

Buckingham, 8th mo. 13, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER :

I have enjoyed my home with feelings not to be described in language, ever since my return ; and the completion of every act of my late visit has left my mind without a cloud in that respect, while the sweet savor of those opportunities I enjoyed with my friends, rests as refreshing dews around my heart. The sensations that arise therefrom are as imperceptible to the natural eye, and the enlivening vigor thereof as incomprehensible to the natural mind, as is the growth of the grass of the field to the ox that feedeth thereon. Rest, O my soul ! in this : that simple obedience is better than sacrifice ; and never may the paltry consideration of a present gratification in the things of this world, overbalance the more substantial one of yielding to that conscious feeling, which ever has brought a corresponding peace in the end. The more I realize the worth of this, the more my mind becomes absorbed in reflections thereon, and the less it roams abroad, that is, out of its own internal bounds, in search of happiness ; and I find that the more this internal satisfaction increases, the enjoyments I once had in the most exalted kind of friendship and social intercourse, decreases. Hence, I seem to know no one after the flesh, nor do I desire ever to know mankind so any more. But these sentiments have a deep mystical meaning, and unless the mind has arrived to that point in experience

where there is no mystery in them, vain would be the powers of language to reveal them. In our Monthly-meeting, which has taken place since my return home, one of the committee in the case of *difficulty*, (which was the complaint from Rhode Island) informed they had attended thereto. The like report was made in the men's meeting, and it was left in that kind of blind way, that I suppose there was not much understanding of it; and it appears from out-door reports, that there has not been a full understanding in the committee; for some say it was quashed; others, that it was sent back to the overseers, to pursue the regular course; and how it is, or how it is to be, is yet undetermined. But the Seventh-day before Monthly-meeting, an overseer collected and brought three of the elders to see me. It so happened that Charles and myself were from home. On Second-day, after meeting, she enquired of me whether I would meet them at the meeting-house, or prefer my own house? I replied, I did not care any thing about it. She then proposed next Fourth-day. I told her I did not make engagements; that if it so happened that I was at meeting, and it suited, that time might do; I could not tell any thing about it; but I desired her to have the other overseers, if she was coming on official business. She said she had called on one of the overseers; that she was not very well, and declined coming. I then asked her what the business was? She put on a demure look, and said,

perhaps they would be better prepared to tell that when we met. "Perhaps you will have it made up by that time," said I. She then began to make a long protestation of their entire silence on the subject as they were coming the other day. I said, I did not doubt that, but I supposed they knew what they were coming for. Yes, she said, they did. I then repeated the question, but she gave me no answer. I afterwards met with the overseer who was represented as not being very well, and on that ground declined coming to see me. She said she was well enough, but told — she had nothing to do with the business; and yesterday she informed me it was not required of me by the discipline to go and see them; that if the overseers had any thing to do, let them come to me; and as for the misrepresentation — gave me, she did not intend to let it rest so, for she did not like such doings; but if I chose to meet them, and wished her to be present, she was willing; and now it rests thus. I think I shall hold myself prepared to meet them, and as the time is short, I defer sending this till after that day, which is one cause of my not writing sooner, believing thee would be desirous to know the event.

FOURTH-DAY EVENING, 16TH.—Yesterday I was quite unwell, but by the application of remedies I have obtained relief, so as to be well enough to attend meeting to-day, where I also met the aforesaid overseer. She insisted on my sitting

down with herself and two of the elders. I told her if it was overseer business, I was willing to meet them, but I did not know that I had any thing to do with the elders. She went to one of them and talked a long time, then came back to me, and asked me if I continued in the same mind? I asked her, what mind? She replied, "Not willing to see them." I said, I was willing to meet them as I proposed, any time or any where. She asked me what objection I had to those elders being present. I said, none at all, and as she had several friends, I would ask the liberty of one; to which she consented. I stepped out and spoke to R. S., and he came in. Her first concern, she mentioned, was, that I was laying waste the Scriptures; and she wished to know why I did so. I replied, I did not, and never had. She said, she did not know how they were to understand me, if I did not, for it was generally understood so. I told them, I thought the Scriptures were most excellent; that they were a chain of consistencies from beginning to end. Well, she said, I ought to make myself better understood, for I said a great deal to discourage them from going to meeting. R. S. then spoke, and said he thought I was well understood, and that what I said was no discouragement, but rather an encouragement to attend them in the right way. E. J. also said she did not understand me as the other overseer did. But all this seemed to have no weight at all with her, for she continued her observations, with all

the earnestness that could be imagined. * * *

* * * She said it was from motives of love that she came to talk with me. I told her she need not have mustered up the elders to come with her, if that was the motive. She said she had a right, according to discipline, to ask whom she pleased. I requested her to show it to me, (for I had taken the book with me.) She looked over it, but at length shut the book. I asked her if she had found it. She replied, very coolly : "not just as she thought it was." She charged me with acting contrary to discipline, in attending meetings from home. I insisted on her pointing out the clause. She searched and looked through and through, but could not find it. I told her she had better learn the discipline, for those who undertook to administer it should know what it was ; for really, it appears to me they do not understand the letter itself. Though we said a great deal about the communication from R. I., that was not made any part of the present concern ; which leads me to think it has dropped.

M. S.

LETTER LVII.

Buckingham, 8th mo. 28, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER :

Though it is not long since I wrote thee, and though there is nothing new or interesting, that I know of to communicate, yet as Dr. Heston called on me a few days since, and offered to

carry a letter, I thought a few lines, informing of the health of the family, might be interesting. I have not been as well as usual for two weeks past, but have kept about mostly, and have attended meetings duly, as they came in course. I do not hear any thing more about the communication from Rhode Island ; and as our Preparative-meeting is past, and nothing reported about me, I conclude they will have to wait for a fresh clue to get hold of me. I have had a number of friendly visiters of late, but I have the most to fear on that hand, and I have felt a great dread in my mind, of a retaliating or politic spirit, lest I should be drawn in to seek to evade the discipline. I very much fear the same spirit is prevailing in the minds of some of the members on our side ; for so fully am I persuaded that strife and debate do not belong to the true Christian, that I had much rather depart from every thing of the kind, and dwell in peace and quiet ; but some how or other, circumstances over which I have no control, combine to detain me in the midst of them. I have felt as much bound to meet at the usual time and place of worship as in former times, and have had to communicate in them, excepting two, ever since I returned ; and some of our gallery folks think that when I speak, I point my discourse right at them. S. Blackfan seems to have received a fresh anointing. His communications are clear, and he appears undaunted in delivering them. Our Quarterly-meeting comes this week ; it is

to be held at Falls. I feel bound to visit the select-meeting again, not knowing what shall befall me there; but the more I see into the iniquity of a system, where an attention to the Spirit of Truth, in all its manifestations, is professed to be our guide, and yet that system plainly says, that no person who is considered to have a gift in the ministry, shall be permitted to set in the select meeting, until they have passed the regular ordeal, the more I see the inconsistency of this system, the more I feel bound to testify against such imposing intolerance. M. S.

LETTER LVIII.

Buckingham, 10th mo. 8, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER:

Having looked thus far for thy arrival in vain, I take up the pen to remind thee of thy relations in Bucks county. I may inform, we are in better health than when I wrote last. I suppose thou hast not been calculating on my case having got into meeting; I will therefore give thee a short detail concerning it. The First-day preceding our last Preparative-meeting, the very active overseer mentioned in a former letter, informed me, after meeting, that some of them thought it would be best to take my case to the next Preparative-meeting. Very well, said I, if you think it essential to your peace, do so; I have nothing to do with it. I attended the following Fourth-day, and sat opposite the gallery. After the

clerk had opened the Preparative-meeting, and a considerable pause ensued, she asked if the overseers had any business to offer. E. J. replied, she knew of none. The other overseer said the London epistle was in the meeting, and queried if it was thought a suitable time to read it. One or two assenting voices were given, and it was read; after which she took a slip of paper from her pocket and gave it to the clerk, which she read, I believe nearly or quite as follows: "Martha Smith has travelled as a minister, contrary to discipline, and frequently disturbed a distant Yearly-meeting, by introducing unsavory views and sentiments." There was not a single word spoken to it, and after some comments on the epistle, meeting broke. Last Second-day was our Monthly-meeting, and the clerk being absent, a person was proposed to assist at the table. She declined, not having her spectacles. S. G. was named, and took the seat. After the business of the meeting was accomplished, the charge against me was read, as the Preparative-meeting report. A dead silence ensued, which E. W. interrupted by proposing a committee appointed, which was objected to by E. B. on the floor of the house, by stating that it was unsafe to act in this way, unless they knew exactly what had been said; for though it might have been unsavory to some, it might have been satisfactory to others; and that they could not come to a judgment in this case, without having it specified. E. W. urged the authority of such a

body and the frequent repetition of the complaint. S. G. urged the manifest breach of discipline. Some others objected to proceeding in a committee; and at length it was proposed to apply to the men for assistance. Some persons opposed this, as not being the regular way of proceeding. At length I arose, and told them I believed it would be right for me to speak in my own defence; and stated the manner in which the charge was introduced, without the knowledge of the other overseer, and without the voice of the Preparative-meeting; that I had never travelled as a minister; I had never gone with the necessary appendages of one; that I had never carried a written certificate as a passport to the hearts of the people; and that I had always informed such as enquired of me, that I was but a common member; with much more on the subject. Some Friends then proposed referring it back to the Preparative-meeting, as it had not come regularly forward. E. W. vindicated the manner in which it had come, and the overseer endeavored to justify her proceedings. A committee was again called for, but opposed by different sentiments. In fine, such a free interchange of sentiments and plain dealing never occurred beneath that roof before, I apprehend. I cannot express the enjoyment I felt during the contest; though when any thing like commendation was heard, I would rather have been absent. But the brow-beating (to use a rough term) that an elder and an overseer gave

those that opposed their measures, and the firmness, or perhaps a better idea of the proceedings may be formed by saying stubbornness, with which the ground was maintained, was most interesting; the more so, because I know that nothing but actual engagements will prove us good soldiers. Had I a sectarian feeling in favor of my own Society, or did I believe their system was less a Babel than other religious systems, I might think that self-interest was the ground of my rejoicing on the occasion; but so far from that, after it was over, and the voice of the meeting to "drop it entirely" prevailed, I seemed to feel like one remanded back to prison. To give a little further of the particulars: in the discussion, so many arose and spoke on the subject—young and old, gay and plain—that an elder got up almost in an agony, and remarked, it was so trying to have so much said, she did desire they might get into the quiet. A pause ensued for a short time, when another elder observed that it was right for us to submit one to another, and if a few friends were named as a committee, the case might be decided. M. W. said it was right for us to submit one to another, but she thought it was most like breaking down the order of any thing she had seen, for such a few to try to carry a point over the heads of many. The clerk replied, it is sorrowfully true that many in this meeting were of that description, that so few of them were willing to stand for the law and the testimony. After another pause, she

called for names, which drew forth such a number against having any thing of it on the minutes, that the elder rose again, and in a tone of distress exclaimed, to drop it. A number repeated the same, and thus it ended. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LIX.

Buckingham, 1st mo. 28, 1827.

DEAR BROTHER :

Our correspondence has ceased for so long a time, that I begin to wonder what is the matter ; whether thou art proving my faith in this matter, as I have expressed my disrelish of committing things to paper in this our day. I have nothing to inform thee of, that would be interesting, concerning the great controversy with us, I believe, supposing thee gets all this news from other sources. I have been much about home since my visit to Baltimore, and have attended meetings as regularly as ever I did in my life, when circumstances would admit of it. Indeed, I feel it important to get my work done in the Society, while I have the opportunity. I get a brush from the elders, and then run on again. In all the transactions of that class of people, the true state of things is more and more developing. In fine, seeing the system is such that none but our own members are suffered to have the opportunity of declaring the truth in our borders, it is in best wisdom that the works of Anti-christ

manifest themselves in such glowing colors as not to be mistaken ; and that a love of truth and justice is leading some amongst us to bear their testimony therefor, in such a way as to arouse that spirit to show itself on many occasions. A long debate arose in our last Monthly-meeting, in consequence of an acknowledgment produced from a female, who had been disowned some time since. It was as full, perhaps, as is ever offered. The first objection was, that she had not often been at meeting ; the next, that she did not bring it herself. We had recourse to the discipline, which was read again and again, and only proved it to be a privilege, not an injunction, that the individual should appear on such an occasion. A few individuals insisted on deferring it another month ; but a large number succeeded in getting a committee appointed to visit her. We have had a social visit from our cousin J. W. He was in Philadelphia, on his way up here, when Elias was there, and attended two of his meetings. He appeared to be rather struck with the state of those meetings. I now recollect I have never given thee any account of my visit to Baltimore, which was very pleasant. I enjoyed the company of some of my old friends with peculiar satisfaction, and also the Yearly-meeting, which I attended mostly in silence. The language was, "let them alone." * *

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M. S.

LETTER LX.

Buckingham, 2d mo. 23, 1827.

DEAR BROTHER:

The day after I sent my last to the post-office, I received thine. It was grateful indeed to hear again from thee, and some of thy remarks were very striking. That of traditionalists only being able to recommend their own bewildered path is very true; for in no instance, perhaps, can man or woman recommend to another any thing that they have not proved for themselves to be good. Of course, those that are resting in the labors of others, have nothing else to direct their fellow pilgrims to; not accustomed to use their own feet to walk with, or their own hands to labor with, separate from the help of other people, they think it presumptuous for any one to walk or work alone. Thus it is with men in trade, who have passing continually through their hands the current coin of the country, and much that belongs to other people. They often despise the simple labor of the mechanic and farmer, who can only realise in the course of years, what they suppose themselves to acquire in a few weeks; but in the end, we often see these very men brought below the level of those they have despised; and to them the reverse of fortune is peculiarly severe. This I conceive to have been somewhat the case with the foolish virgins, as set forth in the parable, that they were brought to solicit the oil, or in other words, a portion of that grace which replenished the

hearts of their more diligent fellow-virgins. Yesterday was our Quarterly-meeting; the Select meeting the day before, which I thought right to attend. A chill almost like that of death accompanied this impression of duty, for some time; but on resigning myself to it, the clouds dispersed, and I felt calm and fearless. After becoming seated among them, my mind was most sweetly gathered out of every thing that could hurt or destroy. This calm continued for a length of time, when it was proposed to proceed to business. Elizabeth Robeson and her companion were present, but E. had not spoken, and I suppose those Orthodox who knew I was there had been laboring under the most violent perturbation in thought, for when S. C. had spoken, C. H. mentioned that if he was not mistaken, there was a person present who was not a member of that meeting. This was confirmed by another Friend. S. C. observed, he was not conscious of any such person being there, and as no disturbance had been made, he thought they might proceed. A hasty and violent opposition was made to this. D. C. observed, that if the individual had any thing to communicate to them, he was willing she should have the opportunity, and then she might withdraw. This was objected to by a number, who peremptorily refused to hear any thing from her. S. C. was surprised that any Friend should anticipate such a thing as a person having any thing to communicate, who was not a regular

member; for his part, he had no such view, nor did he want to draw any thing from her, but if they would settle down, as long as there was no disturbance made, he thought they were in a better situation to transact their business than they would be if muscular power was appealed to, which had been advised. C. H. was astonished to hear such disorder encouraged, and to talk of settling down in the quiet, until order was maintained; first support the order, and *then* settle down. * * * * *

A committee was appointed, and an adjournment about to take place, when I felt at liberty to leave them, which I did. Having twice attempted merely to inform them why I came, and of the peaceful quiet I had enjoyed amongst them, I was interrupted, and sat down. I remained in the other apartment until I thought they had done most of their business, and went in again. After they got through, I got up to speak. A Friend arose immediately, and said something; but I heeded not, until I had expressed the peace I felt, and my full belief, that to minds rightly centred, no external circumstance could be a disturbance. Had I been allowed to have spoken before, I would have said, that though the whirlwind and fire had passed before me, I had heard the still, small voice within me, and the Lord spake it. If I would covet any thing but perfect resignation to the will of God, it would be to tabernacle on the mount, or that situation of mind wherein I

met all I have repeated, and I suppose ten times more, that day, and a good deal yesterday at Quarterly-meeting, with an entire abstraction from every thing like resentment. M. S.

LETTER LI.

Bristol, 4th mo. 28, 1827.

DEAR BROTHER :

Thou hast had ample information of the transactions of the late Yearly-Meeting, long before now, I suppose ; therefore it is not worth while for me to say much about them. Our meeting was a time of enjoyment and refreshing to me ; seasons of great liberty, both in speaking and feeling, at times ; and when it was otherwise, a willingness to suffer took away the sensation of suffering. Cousin J. W. attended the meeting. He is one of the most decided in sentiment against the measures of Quaker Orthodoxy that is to be found. I remained in town until yesterday, when I came to this place, and am waiting for Charles to meet me. I attended three of the meetings this week ; two Monthly-meetings, in which I witnessed the determined disposition to rule with the rod of iron every opposing sentiment that arises. Jemima Burson produced a very good minute from Richland Monthly-meeting, to that of the Northern District, Philadelphia, expressive of a concern to visit the families belonging to that meeting ; but it was not received. The reason assigned was, that some of

the rulers could see no light on it. Fifth-day, at Green-street, a Declaration of Independence was read, which was feebly opposed in the men's meeting, but more obstinately in the women's; and after the body of the meeting dispersed, the few Orthodox that remained, appointed representatives to the Quarter. I have got a copy of the Address from the Convention at Green-street, and I think it pretty good; but as to the numbers that will come out and stand firm, I am not sanguine; neither am I as to the event of this separation, or its consequences. I believe that light is increasing, true knowledge progressing, and that, independent of all the systematising in the world, religion will spread and flourish, societies rise and increase, become formal in their branches, and divisions ensue. This will continue to be the case in all systems of religion, and until mankind come to a more perfect understanding of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, they will be seeking for it in these things. For my part, I feel entirely free that all should pursue the way that is opened before them; and believe that good will come out of much seeming evil. It is enough for me to know that hitherto the Lord alone has been my helper, and all I can ask is that He may be my preserver in the future; which I have no doubt He will be, if I obey Him. When the time arrives for thy paying us a visit, I trust we shall be favored to rejoice together. M. S.

LETTER LXII.

Newport, 6th mo. 12, 1827.

DEAR CHARLES :

My spirits, from the first view I had of coming at this time to New-York and Newport, were never high ; and while in New-York last week, I can say they were calm and equal, as I kept carefully from either retrospect or anticipation, and dwelt only in the present moment, which I know to be the only safe ground for me ; watching continually for the coming of the Son of man. Some of my friends were fearful, that having the scrip of paper with its contents, I should be exalted thereby ; but in this I have been fully confirmed in what I have heretofore believed, that these outward supports were much more in the way of the mind realising to the full the enjoyment of an entire dependence on God, than an addition to it. And though, in the present state of things, they may have their use in some way or other, they must all be left behind, as the soul enters that state of liberty which the truth alone can give. This is the freedom I hope for ; this is the freedom I am willing to endure hardship for, accounting nothing too near or too dear to be parted with, if haply I may attain thereto. I have attended two sittings of the meeting, and the third commences at three o'clock this afternoon. Things go on in the old way, only that I think they stamp them higher than formerly. I have found nothing to do, but sit a silent spectator amongst them yet.

FOURTH-DAY MORNING, 13TH.—Went to meeting yesterday afternoon. Expressed a few words on the all-sufficiency of the grace of God in the heart, to effect the work of redemption, if attended to. There was no apparent opposition, that I know of, while I was speaking. *

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NEW-YORK, 6TH MO. 15.—Feeling quite released from Newport, after attending four sittings of the Yearly-meeting, we left there on Fourth-day afternoon, and after a safe, though rather slow passage, arrived here yesterday afternoon. Sarah Eastburn is pretty well. She is staying with Maria Imlay while I write this. I have not much more to say at present; but having some social duties to attend to here, shall endeavor to fulfil them, in order to leave the place without regret. * * * M. S.

LETTER LXIII.

Buckingham, 10th mo. 29, 1827.

DEAR BROTHER:

Thy letter of the 3d came duly to hand, and was very interesting, as is every article of fresh intelligence respecting the state of things in Society. All tend to confirm the belief that a great work is in the wheel, and progressing on to a great event; which, if many of our professors of religion had but the faintest glimpse of, they would startle, and perhaps turn back; but in great wisdom that event is hidden. And while

many and various circumstances are tending to the same point, the different instruments or co-workers therein seem to themselves to have each a separate allotment; and perhaps, like the prophet of old, thousands consider that they are left alone. I am informed that the new Yearly-meeting was a favored one, and that the counsel of many was, that toleration and the greatest forbearance to our dissenting brethren and sisters should be manifested. I suppose this must be the prevailing sentiment of the more reflecting part of the community in general; but many seem to think that discipline must be put in practice on the active ones amongst them. For my part, I cannot say what is best to be done; people will act according to the state they are in, and the effect will ever manifest its cause. Thus it is that experience is our best teacher; and finding our most sanguine expectations often (and always when built on changeable things) disappointed, we learn moderation, we learn forbearance, and we learn humility of mind. There are many circumstances which go to convince me that the true Christian travellers amongst us will yet have to sacrifice their all in Society, before they can enter the land of Canaan, and finally settle down into the true rest.

It appears that the *Creedites* are determined to be the legitimate meetings, in every department; and though a partial separation has taken place, as to meeting to transact business, yet our meetings for worship remain the same, and they

manifest a resolution to disown those that do not submit to them. They have already visited, for that purpose, in Buckingham, T. C., J. W. and I. L.; and C. R. of Plumstead. If they disown them, of course they will oppose their enjoying the privileges of members. Now, suppose the other party disown even the most active among them, the consequence will be a total disregard of its authority, and a regular adhering to their present situations.

* * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXIV.

Buckingham, 7th mo. 22, 1828.

DEAR BROTHER:

The agitations of Society, which have so long yielded matter for the pen, have seemed to subside, like one of those heavy thunder-gusts that are often witnessed in the elements of nature, leaving a kind of heavenly calm around us. Yet, methinks, like one of those scenes, the distant thunder may yet be heard, in low and sullen murmurs, as it passes on to other plains. By the different publications of the day, both sides of the question are laid before a public whose deep attention is arrested by the subject; and the more the veil, or covering, is rent away from those things that can be kept secret no longer, the more will appear the natural deformity of high profession, when unsupported by solid prin-

ciple ; and in that article I believe many of both parties will be found to be wanting. The prejudice of education is so strong among us, that I rather suppose nothing short of being razed to the ground will ever wean our affections from the beloved edifice and idolized system. Please give my respects to P. and E. Titus, and such other friends as may enquire after me. * *

M. S.

LETTER LXV.

Albany, 11th mo. 9, 1828.

DEAR BROTHER :

In attending the meetings of Coemans and New Baltimore, I have smiled at and pitied the superstition of the people, who rejected me when there before, though I then came in the same authority, but, not having the external insignia of a commission, obtained no place in their minds. Could our disciplinarians see how plainly they deny, in fact, the profession they make of feeling where words came from, by holding up the necessity of a written certificate, to preserve us from impositions of persons not authorized, it appears to me they would hang their heads for very shame.

M. S.

LETTER LXVI.

Saratoga, 11th mo. 20, 1828.

DEAR BROTHER :

In the reports from the different Monthly-meetings to the Quarter, (*Saratoga*) there was one

from Lowville, signed by three female Friends, stating that on account of the smallness of their number, they had not held a Monthly-meeting, but could inform that the meeting for worship was kept up, and that love and unity were felt increasingly to prevail. I thought there was more life in that simple statement than I have felt in all the answers to the queries for seven years past. * * * *

21st.—Yesterday proved a very wet one, but we had an excellent meeting; and now, as some may think I have been rather short, in that I have not mentioned, according to the fashion (of ministers, so called,) what favored or unfavored ones we have been in, I can only say that I measure divine favor by my own obedience thereto; that all meetings are good to me in that; and if I may judge of the states of the people from the freedom I have felt in declaring truth among them, I should say that the ground of the hearts of many is prepared to receive it in its simplicity; but when it comes to the active operation thereof, I suppose many will stumble at the cross. The rules and regulations of Society, though acknowledged to be only for transgressors, must be strenuously observed by those who are not so, that in fine it centres here: those are the transgressors that do not live up to the letter, and those are the judges that have not come fully into the spirit of it. And however they may declare that there is no religion in the mere form, in the plain dress, or any other of the rules we

have, yet the strong bias of the mind for these rises in testimony against any one who deviates therefrom. Only let it be said that such an one has altered his or her dress, and it immediately follows that they have left the principle; thus manifesting their belief that if religion does not consist in that, it is connected therewith, never to be divided. There is another thing that has got such hold of us that I fear nothing but rending entirely to pieces will loose:—that we are ahead of all other professors. But notwithstanding these things are so irksome to me, I feel now willing to wear the bonds for Society's sake, until it is meet I should be released therefrom; and if it be all the days of my life, I hope to be contented.

22d.—This morning the sun shone with peculiar brightness, both externally and internally. Leaving our kind friends, S. Shepherd and family, we set our faces northward, piloted by a number of Friends returning from Quarterly-meeting. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXVII.

Rutland, Vt., 11th mo. 30, 1828.

DEAR HUSBAND:

* * * Attended Queensbury meeting as mentioned in the conclusion of my last letter, where John Comly had a great deal to say, and as usual, that which was instructive to the learner,

consoling to the mourner, and encouraging to the sincere traveller. After meeting we went to Seth Thomas's, where John Comly and J. Roberts came to lodge, and we spent a long evening pleasantly together, the conversation turning on religion and religious improvement, without implicating the Orthodox. My feelings have very often been wrought up to what some might call warmth, but which I believe to be a just zeal for the rights of individuals; and I have sometimes been constrained to speak on behalf of the absent, when I have heard the actions of those represented in the highest colors, and conclusions drawn respecting motives, in so decisive a manner that the reporters appeared to sit as accusers and judges, and thus give a bias to the judgment of others also. * * * * *

I have remembered that last Fifth-day was Bucks Quarterly-meeting, and my mind was with our Friends there, several times; for though we are nearly three hundred miles from you all, I feel you all present with me almost continually.

* * * As I have not mentioned before, the manner in which we have been led about, I will now advert a little to it. I had no distinct view of Ferrisburg Quarter when I left home, nor for some time after; having heard that it was unitedly Orthodox; but in the progress of our journey, hearing otherwise, we were turned this way. The true state of the case appears to be this: At the Quarterly-meeting succeeding

the Yearly-meeting, the Orthodox committee attended, and none of the other committee being there, Friends made no attempt to do any business, but sat and heard it transacted in silence. At the next Quarterly-meeting, some of Friends' committee came on; then they took a firm stand in appointing the clerk and doing the business of the meeting; after which they left the house to the Orthodox, who are far the most numerous—nine meetings out of sixteen being exclusively so, and all the others, except one, divided in numbers.

As we came on to Saratoga, it began to open before us, and finding we should have time to take those meetings and get round to Black River, and attend the meetings there, also in time to get to the Half Year's meeting in Canada, we have proceeded thus far accordingly. * * *

* * * Came to Joseph Tobias's to lodge, himself not at home, but we were kindly received by his wife and son. The evening was spent in instructive conversation, without implicating the Orthodox, which this observation implies to be of rare occurrence; and truly my heart often sickens at the appearance of things amongst us, when I see those from whom I would hope better things, justifying themselves by the demerits of others; and while they give full latitude to all, as being ahead of the Orthodox, account every thing as ranterism that is ahead of themselves or their own party. An expression of a certain author, which I read many years

since, that "that is not a whit to be proud of that cannot shine without a foil," has drawn the comparison in my mind, that a religion that cannot stand on its own merits, is not a religion to be satisfied with. But from the mixed state of Society, there is no perfection to be looked for therein. And to declare one's sentiments to the full, in conversation, at all times, would be to wage war with both parties; that while one has a work to do amongst them, there are many things to be endured, wherein we can understand the expression—"Suffer it to be so now." * * *

Zebulon Frost came and piloted us to Rowland T. Robinson's, at Ferrisburgh, and a meeting being appointed on Seventh-day at eleven o'clock, we attended, and it proved a very satisfactory one; after which Joseph Rogers accompanied us to Joseph Hoag's, at Monkton, the meeting there being all Orthodox, except two families. I thought it best to go to Joseph's (as he was rather considered the head thereof,) and have some talk with him about attending. We were kindly received and invited to stay, as fellow creatures, being assured at the same time that he could not fellowship with us, if we were what he had heard. This was all we could expect, as we did not go to solicit unity. We therefore concluded to stay all night; and the manner in which we were received made it quite easy for me to inform them why we came. We had considerable talk, and there did not appear much, if any, difference in reality between us. But the great

obstacle was, I had placed myself with the Green-street party, and the leader of that was Elias Hicks and other obnoxious characters. I felt no liberty to enter into a defence of those, with one whose mind was made up, and whose bark evidently appeared to me too small to stem the tide of free enquiry. And though I turned the subject of meeting with them in every way, I could not obtain any grant of freedom therein, neither to have one in the same house in the afternoon, nor to have the appointment of one at another place spoken of, at the close of their meeting. Such is the inflexible tenor of Quaker discipline, and such would probably be the result of an application to those in the same station among *us*, by any person, however conscientious, who resembled in the remotest degree those professors of religion whom we are pleased to designate as hirelings.

We were kindly treated throughout, nor do I think there was the least disunity felt with me at heart, but the apprehensions of the head bore away the victory. However, feeling liberty in my own mind, I went to meeting, and there expressed what I felt, in as few words as possible. There was no opposition to what I said, and though there were two other communications afterward, there was nothing very pointed in them; and upon the whole I had a good meeting, and Benjamin expressed the same. It saves us abundance of travelling, through the most mountainous parts of the country, that we are

thus rejected by them ; and I have no doubt but the same power that brought Israel out of Egypt, and that dwelt in the King of Salem, is with them the same as He is with us, and that by becoming subject thereunto, all will experience the effects thereof, which are quietness and assurance forever.

* * * Came to Plattsburgh, where are four Friends, members of Society, with their families, some of whom are not members. My feelings being arrested here, on account of the people, I proposed having a meeting, and on application being made for the court-house, it was granted by the sheriff, information given, and a large collection of people assembled at early candle-light. I felt almost to shrink with dismay on seeing men apparently of the first standing in the place, enter the house. The fear that attends me on occasions like this, seems to be, lest the cause of religion may lose more than it may gain, through the weakness of the instrument ; but I am jealous of myself, fearing that the pride of the creature is at the bottom. However, I was favored to express my feelings to the relief of my own mind, and I leave the rest. More solid attention I never witnessed on such an occasion. Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Moore, invited us home with her. We accepted the invitation, and next morning (the 13th) returned to Peru. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXVIII.

Philadelphia, 4th mo. 21, 1829.

DEAR CHARLES :

Sympathy and affection induce me to address a few lines to thee, at the same time my feelings are so overpowered that I scarcely know how to write at all.

The peculiar circumstances at Plumstead, and the seeming necessity for my presence at home, on account of domestic affairs, were strong inducements for me to hasten my return. But without being sensible that these objects were leading me from the higher one of religious duty, I was all prepared to leave on First-day morning, as thou hast heard, no doubt, by E. B. and L. W.; but during the delay of the boat, in consequence of some part of the machinery being insufficient, I had time to reflect more fully on the expediency of staying a little longer in the scene of uncertainty, which I may call it; for such it was, both internally and externally. Fear for personal safety assailed me, and involuntarily I looked around for a way to escape. Such was the perturbation of my mind; though I do not know that there was in fact any danger. But when the Burlington came along side to take the passengers off, I had no heart to go on board. Standing pensive and alone in the midst of a crowd, after the friends left me, A. Lower came and invited me to go home with him. The key of sympathy unlocked the springs of my heart and deluged me with tears. And that sympathy,

I think, must have been a participation of thy feelings at the disappointment, for I have seemed to cease feeling for myself on such occasions. So long accustomed have I been to disappointments in that way, and so often convinced that true peace and solid satisfaction arises from a subjected will, and dwells only in a devoted heart, that as to myself, it matters not where I am, or how I fare, if I do but know that I am in the way of duty. And the innocent reply of the child Jesus to his mother seems applicable to the case of every soul that is enlightened by his spirit: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business."

The Monthly-meetings of this city are to be held to-morrow and next day, and after that it is probable I may feel released. And I think it very probably the best thing for myself to be out of the way in the hurry and bustle of the sale at Plumstead, though I was quite willing to have been there, to assist others. I hope suitable help will be procured for sister Sarah. There is nothing to be sold that I feel particularly desirous about. I very much desire that all may be done in peace and good will, and that the possession of our individual rights of property may not cause the slightest separation in natural affection; for should that be the case, there may be cause almost to regret that there was any thing left for us. But at all events, I believe it unsafe for me, considering my other engagements, to let my mind much into it, or to any thing else of

a merely temporal nature, at present; for it is emphatically true that we cannot serve two masters. When I turn to take a survey of the trials and difficulties that may arise to my dear family from my leaving them so much, I am always recalled from such a view by a remembrance of the blessings we have hitherto enjoyed in health and peace, that I durst not for a moment indulge a thought to wander into a wish for myself in any way, save that of becoming more resigned to the Divine Will, which is the cross of Christ; and to become acquainted with, and preserved through the efficacy thereof from gross evil, and eventually enabled thereby to overcome all the fiery darts of the wicked one—the creaturely will—is all that I can ask for my precious children, or thou, my dear companion. And the further I advance in heavenly mysteries, that is, the more these are unfolded to me, the more I feel the responsibility of my standing; that knowing it is grace, divine favor, that has preserved me hitherto, and enabled me to come thus far, I am bound by all the ties of gratitude to believe, that through the same favor I can go through the whole process of regeneration, if I keep the faith:

“Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;

’Twas grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace shall lead me on”—

And also that all others may, through the same means, obtain the same great end. I therefore

desire above all things that my fellow beings may become acquainted with it, and walk in it, and then all will do well. Farewell at present.
M. S.

LETTER LXIX.

Philadelphia, 4th mo. 21, 1829.

DEAR UNCLE AND AUNT:

A way now opens for me to address you, and I may now inform, that widely as we have been separated for many months past, by distance of land, and widely as it may be supposed we are separated in sentiment, I have deeply sympathised with you in the trials that I am sensible you have had to endure. But as these things, let them rise apparently from what cause they may, as to external sources, produce an effect on the mind in that way we are disposed to receive them, and as "all things will work together for good to those that love the Lord," I desire that none of us may unprofitably look back, or dwell in the present, but press on with a single eye to the Creator's glory, as the only way in which true peace is to be found.

I may inform you of the decease of our dear father, and the peaceful manner of his close, which was on the 16th of last month. His strength had been gradually giving way for two or three years, and he frequently had a kind of fainting fits, though I do not know that he had been confined to his bed a day at any time during

some months. On First-day, the 14th, a number of his friends and neighbors visited him, and he expressed the great satisfaction he felt in having their company, which he often did on such occasions. That night he had an ill turn; brother Samuel's were sent for—he was better next day—sat in his arm chair most of it—ate his supper, and at an early hour retired to bed as usual. Mother went to him some little time after. He said he did not feel like going to sleep, but lay very comfortable. She went to bed and dropped asleep. About twelve o'clock he spoke to her, and said he was going. She had brother Thomas and wife aroused. He was much oppressed with phlegm, but after taking some drink, lay down, and quietly passed away. I was not at home, having been engaged during the winter in visiting meetings in the State of New-York. I had often felt a desire to be at home when this change took place, but when I heard of it in the city of New-York, it was with no other sensation than that of solemn resignation.

The calmness that had pervaded his mind, for the most part, for several years, and especially for the last three, evinced that his sun was approaching its horizon with increasing serenity. That he passed away with so little bodily suffering I think an unspeakable favor, so that instead of mourning, there is cause to rejoice on his account; and also to thank God and take courage, that through the power and efficacy of redeeming love, we may also experience that of weather-

ing the storm and outriding the tempests that are to be met with, more or less frequently, in our passage through this world, and at last happily reach the haven of eternal rest. M. S.

LETTER LXX.

New-York, 11th mo. 21, 1829.

DEAR CHARLES :

Since writing my last letter at Purchase, I have felt no more liberty to write home than to go there, until now ; but such has been the desire of my heart for the latter, that I have daily looked for light to dawn in that direction. In a few hours after cousin S. left me, I was called to Samuel Leffert's, on account of the extreme illness of Maria Imlay, who was unwell with a heavy cold when we first came from the Island, after our visit thereon was finished, though not then considered dangerous. I went, as requested, and found her laboring under deep oppression of the lungs, apparently near her end. She was sensible, and I was one who listened to directions which she gave concerning the distribution of her temporal effects. This was done with intervals of breathing, for strength to proceed ; after which, and correcting what was written amiss, she desired us to leave her to rest. The doctor proposed her feet and legs being wrapped in flannel, wet with hot spirits, which, with a little sleep, so revived her that he thought fit to give her an emetic. This produced a free dis-

charge, and relieved her so much that she said she was as well as any of us ; but so firm was the inflammation of that part of her system, that though she was frequently relieved by the same operation, yet it refused to yield to all our efforts, and on Fourth-day evening last, ten minutes before nine o'clock, she quietly breathed her last, in a sweet sleep. The manner of her departure we rejoiced in, having been apprehensive she would suffocate. I had been with her almost continually from the time I was first called until perhaps an hour and a half before she expired. Not thinking her end so near, I left her for the purpose of obtaining a night's sleep, and also with the intention of taking the boat for New Brunswick next morning, if there was not a change in her, of which I had no foresight ; for though from the nature of her disease, her close might be expected at any hour, yet from her remaining strength, there appeared a possibility of her living several weeks. On Sixth-day night she foresaw her approaching end, which was beautiful in her view, and attended with a melody that broke forth in rapturous sounds. She expressed the resignation and love that filled her soul, that her day's work was done, and all was well within. Her remains were taken to the meeting-house yesterday at ten o'clock, and after a meeting which may be called a solemn one, conveyed to the last deposit of mortality. John Plummer, of Long Island, bore a short testimony to her religious worth, which was very grateful

to her friends. Thus closed a life, nearly all of which has been devoted to the cause of truth and righteousness. With a mind that rose superior to all the conflicting scenes of time, she endured the accumulated and peculiar trials of her day, and was blessed at last with that evidence of acceptance with the Father, which is the crown of all. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXI.

Buckingham, 1st mo. 18, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER :

Thy answer to my last came duly to hand, and should have met its deserved return ere now, but that it happened to arrive just after my harp of social communication was laid by unstrung, and domestic affairs engrossing my hands entirely, left nothing but the thinking powers at liberty, and these, too, rather inclined to revolt from the past (as the stale manna) and every thing connected with it, excepting that sometimes some of the sympathising ones with whom I met in my travels come into view. Among these is my dear friend A. L., and but for the reason above assigned, I should have written to her. I rather suppose that accumulating trials have attended and still await her; but as trial proves our faith, it is rather to be rejoiced in than lamented over; also, that whatever mortifies or brings into subjection the creature, at the

same time exalts the Creator's power ; therefore whenever our fellow beings become the objects of these trials, if we search sufficiently deep, we shall discover the hand of Providence in, under and through all. As to our dear departed Maria, it feels of so little consequence what is said of her, that it is less than the dust of the balance in comparison with that resignation that paved her way to a happier sphere. As for any thing like a recantation, I do not believe a particle of it, and feel sorry that the *hyena* stalks in spirit so boldly within our borders. Poor, dear P.! I hope she will not be deterred from her duty amidst the flattering temptations to compromise, for the world in any of its allurements.

With little intermission, I have enjoyed more than seven weeks at home, in which time we have had the company of many of our friends ; but this dear domestic scene must again be given up. I have had a minute from the Monthly-meeting ever since the Twelfth month last, for visiting the Western Quarter, and look to next Sixth-day as the time for setting out;—expect to go *equipped in good order.* * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXII.

Buckingham, 3d mo. 5, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER :

Thou wilt doubtless think me very deficient in attention, by my long silence, when I tell thee

I have been at home all this winter, excepting some friendly visits, and some days with a sick friend, who is since deceased. Thou wilt perhaps be surprised that I have not performed the visit mentioned in my last, the day being set on which to take our departure. I think my mind was fully resigned, or at least resolved to be so, for the work. But a circumstance which it is not proper to commit to paper, and which I could not prevent, intervened—the time passed by—and as I could not go in the dark, I returned the minute to the Monthly-meeting, and have felt perfectly released, thus far, from the service. I have enjoyed being at home more than I can express, and have enjoyed the winter more than ever I remember to have done before.

The friend with whom I spent some days was Hannah Betts, wife of Cyrus, an innocent young woman, and through her last days an instructive example of patience and fortitude. She was favored with a view of the enjoyment that awaited her, more than two weeks before her decease. She spoke of it with a zeal and energy which such a view could alone inspire. Her disease was consumption. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXIII.

Buckingham, 3d mo. 25, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * Thy account of the closing scene of Elias Hicks was such as was to be

expected from a course of years devoted to the cause of truth, in that way which his best judgment dictated and in the sincerity of his heart he believed correct; and from all that in my short experience I have gathered as an evidence on the mind, an approving conscience. It is that sincerity that produces the feeling which is peace through life, confidence in death, and fruition in eternity.

4TH MO. 20.—On looking at the date of the foregoing, I find it is almost a month since I commenced. Thy usual feeling and kind forbearance, I trust, will make the allowance. Interruption by company prevented my finishing it at the time, and the various duties of domestic life afterwards.

I am now in Philadelphia. I have attended the Yearly-meeting, which went on very much in the usual way, and am staying to attend the Monthly-meeting at Cherry-street to-morrow. It has been with pleasure that I have mingled, with much kindred feeling among friends and acquaintances—drinking from the same fountain of life and love; and it has been with instruction I have viewed among these, some, who from a certain cause existing in animal feeling, have manifested a repulsive coolness. The habitation or dwelling-place of peace to my mind is in the Truth; my hope is the firmness of that foundation; and my consolation, the immutability thereof; and thus I feel, as it is expressed in Scripture, that “the name of the Lord (his pre

serving, supporting power) is a strong tower," unto which the soul can flee and find a safe retreat from the storms of contending passions, the distraction of contested opinions, and the confusion of different tongues ; and from the height of this retreat, looks forth upon others with a hope that all will eventually come, through the progressive stages or states of preparation, into the enjoyment of those internal privileges, which, after all the struggles therefor, are felt to be the gift of mercy, filling the heart of man with gratitude and love ; bursting every cord and opposing barrier, and coming forth in that kind of expression which will most effectually relieve the pressure ; and hence, though many hearing these, might not comprehend the meaning thereof, the end is answered, and even that which might be supposed a waste by some, proves the anointing to others.

* * * Since coming to town it has been my view to visit New-York again ; but whether it will amount to a personal visit to the Yearly-meeting or not, is yet to determine ; and it is not for me to make the choice. I have heard nothing about the proceedings with you, except the short sketch thou gave me, but cannot say that I feel any solicitude on account thereof. There is much, very much, to be done in abolishing old things, in order to establish the new ; and until old things are done away, all things cannot become new, either in an individual or collective capacity. Therefore let every thing go

to the fire that is for the fire, and every thing to the sword that is for the sword, saith thy affectionate sister,

M. S.

LETTER LXXIV.

Buckingham, 6th mo. 22, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER :

I read thy last with peculiar satisfaction, as it expressed thy fondness for retirement, a disposition peculiarly calculated to produce that kind of enjoyment befitting rational beings ; and the mind that does not possess it, in some degree, methinks must be a miserable waste, at least for certain portions of time, and an utter stranger, may I not say, to the true excellency of the sublime precepts and doctrines of Jesus, whose every sentence, in my view, goes to draw the mind to an investigation of its own premises, the contemplation of its own riches and worth, and finally, to a settlement in itself, as the abiding place of the soul, where all that a reasonable being desires is found, and the new or spiritual *man* dwells at *home*. But I am sensible we may retire from the crowd and the hurry of business in a state far short of this ; yet that retirement and reflection are preparatory steps or instruments thereto, I firmly believe ; and the mind that sets in that channel or course, becomes habituated thereto, so that in the midst of society or the hurry of business, it knows a secret pavilion wherein it holds communion with its God.

And to such a mind, I apprehend, there can be no unfathomable mystery to pry into, no impenetrable secret hanging over his fate ; for immutable is the foundation of his hopes, and to him it is no cause of concern whether he realise as an individual, in a region beyond the stars, those fond hopes and expectations which serve as beacons or talismans in the progressive work of his day. He knows that the waters of life will be forever and ever flowing, for the replenishing of thirsty souls ; and in the glorious certainty of this, the creature *man* is lost. * * * *

* * We remain in health. I have the great satisfaction of attending to domestic concerns, with the assistance of my little girls, two of whom go to school. This is the only privilege that I feel fearful of, as being particularly calculated to ensnare my affections ; and I therefore know the necessity of a willingness to sacrifice it, whenever duty calls.

I mentioned in my last the extracts from the late Yearly-meeting, and the burthen it was to me to hear them. I attended Falls Monthly-meeting the same week, where they were read again, which opened the way for some (I hope) useful discussion. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXV.

Buckingham, 10th mo. 15, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * * I feel but little to say respecting Society affairs at present. They all seem like something almost out of sight. New meetings may be set up, and new orders of discipline instituted, and probably instead of advancing the great cause of truth and righteousness in the earth, they will be additional impediments to individual improvement, which is the basis of all reformation. My almost constant feeling, of late, has been a weariness of earthly things, and a kind of sickening at the view of so much bustle about religion, while there is evidently so much of it lacking. But I am not in a mood to say much at present. I am deliberating, or rather I am waiting, to see whether the balance will turn in favor of going to Baltimore or not. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXVI.

Buckingham, 11th mo. 30, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * * In my last letter I mentioned that I thought of going to Baltimore, but was undetermined. I will now go back and inform thee of some circumstances that transpired in the course of last summer. I think I informed thee of the reading of the extracts from the

Yearly-meeting in the Monthly-meeting, last Sixth month ; that I expressed my feelings fully on the occasion, and had received a visit from a Friend on account of my so doing. We had considerable conversation on the subject, and finding he could not convince me of an error, and further, that I justified the ground I had taken, he left me, after saying it was not worth while for us to talk any more. The Friend was — L. He had been in the habit of calling and conversing freely on subjects connected with Society, and though we did not agree in opinion respecting the ordinances thereof, we had always been perfectly friendly, and I had no thought of that circumstance interrupting our social intercourse, at the time ; but so it proved ;—he never called again. At the Monthly-meeting in the Eighth month, I mentioned a feeling of duty to attend Ohio, Indiana and Baltimore Yearly-meetings, and some meetings as way opened in the journey. After receiving the free concurrence of the women's meeting, I went to the men's, and informed them of the prospect. I think — L. was the first one that spoke, saying he did not feel that unity to flow through his mind that would warrant him in expressing it. Several gave their assent to my going, and several others expressed they had no disposition to prevent me from it. One saw no further about it than to appoint a committee to confer with me, and adjourn the Monthly-meeting. ——— L. united with that, as did several others. My im-

pressions became very strong that this course was the effect of prior disaffection, and that some secret plan was concealed underneath ; and after expressing that impression, without objecting to the proposed conference, I informed them I thought it best for me to leave them to agree among themselves on the subject, which I then did, and the meeting afterward dividing into three parts, viz : unity, disunity, and disapprobation of a committee of conference upon the ground that it was the peculiar province of this Monthly-meeting to decide in such cases. Thus they could come to no point but a negative on my proposition.

My feelings were acute on the occasion, that within the compass of three short years, those who had professedly supported my claim to liberty of conscience, against the stern front of church power, had opposed, in the course of the term above named, a committee of the same kind as now proposed, should take such a stand in the face of all their former pretensions to unity and fellowship, was rather more than I expected. However I was bound, they had put on those very shackles as a pretext for setting me at liberty, and I must proclaim independence at once if I did not submit. I was blessed in feeling that I had done my duty, and that if it should be my duty to proceed without the meeting's concurrence, I was bound in the covenant of life to obey. My mind remained calm, and without an evidence of more being required, until the

time of Tenth month Monthly-meeting drew nigh, when I looked forward to renewing, or rather informing them again of an expectation of attending Baltimore Yearly-meeting, and went to the Monthly-meeting in full expectation of so doing; but the thing died so completely with me, that I had no liberty to mention it. I then supposed it was all over, and that the three hung so entirely together that I was not permitted to divide what had been a united concern. For some days after the Monthly-meeting these were my thoughts; but then Baltimore again appeared, with the view that I could go to Philadelphia, get on board the steamboat, and land in the former place at evening, and there was no reasonable excuse why I should not comply. It would not be a direct violation of discipline, at least not an unprecedented one. I could go without any particular companion; thus no one need be implicated with me; and thus the balance stood when I last wrote to thee, while I watched the preponderating beam without any anxiety as to the event, when it turned in favor of going. Though undecided in the evening as to setting out, on waking next morning early, feeling rather confirmed, I arose and prepared; a friend that was going, having offered me a conveyance to Philadelphia, called, and we proceeded.

I felt no pleasure in any external circumstance attending it, in anticipation, well knowing the deep-rooted veneration for what is termed the *order*, to have overspread the Society almost as a

leprosy ; but knowing also that my safety depended upon the frowns rather than the smiles of men, under the present state of things, I was induced to rejoice in secret that I was once more reduced to the necessity of stemming the current of popularity.

* * * I attended the sittings of both select and Yearly-meetings, had free, open service therein, and, upon the whole, never enjoyed such a season more. Attended Philadelphia Quarterly-meeting, also Abington Quarter, on my return. The Yearly-meeting was said to be one of the most harmonious that had ever been attended. It was indeed somewhat remarkable ; but how often have we seen the severest storms succeed the serenest days. I rather think our cousin — is on the improving hand, and if Society does not get alarmed, lay hands too suddenly upon him, and so interrupt his progress, he may become perfected into an instrument of true honor in the cause of righteousness. * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXVII.

Buckingham, 2d mo. 27, 1831.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * There are two paragraphs in thy last that I consider worth a direct reply. First, as to the motives of my friend — L., thy observations may be just, for aught I know ; those on the connection of the various members

of the mind, or inner man, I think perfectly so ; and as the members of the body are all and each set in operation by an instinctive influence of the brain (so said,) the peculiar inhabitant of the head, so all the members of the soul are set in operation by that intelligence which is the first fruit of intellectual life, and proceeds from the head or fountain of that life, they will operate in harmony together ; and that faculty called reason, or the capacity for reasoning, comparing, and forming conclusions, so as to fix a true judgment, being the staple or key which turns and sustains the whole. As all the powers or faculties of the mind are kept within the sphere of its attractive influence, the balance is kept up, and a proper equilibrium of the powers and propensities is experienced. For there is not one true enjoyment but what is rational, and there can be no real sorrow of soul but out of the divine harmony. But such are the effects of education ;—beclouded views, bewildering opinions, and imaginations fostered in the fire of zeal which is not according to true knowledge—that it seems as if the true tone of the soul might be lost amidst the variety of impressions that enter it through the medium of the two animal senses, seeing and hearing. Perhaps it is out of this wilderness state of things that the true church will eventually emerge, fair as the sun, whose dazzling brightness would put out or destroy the vision of those who should be so injudicious as to gaze on its full, blazing orb, yet clear as the moon to those

who view her as reflecting her light on all the heavenly host; and terrible as an army with banners, arrayed in all the dignity of Truth, marching with a firm, steady and even step, her banners the olive and white, emblems of peace and righteousness, bearing down upon all false pretensions, and deceptive appearances of religion.

To return to — L. Of the effects of his sudden turn of feeling and manners on my mind, I can say but little. I have not been sensible of its producing an injurious effect thereon, but it furnished it with another evidence of the duplicity of man, while under the ministration of an outward law, which I see so much of that I have feared it would beget a jealousy in me, that may eat out what is called charity, but which I believe amounts to no more than a kind of benevolent allowance for the frailties of humanity. For true charity I believe to be that divine feeling which embraces the souls of mankind, without seeing even the wickedness of their ways. *

* * * * I may inform thee that we have just returned from a visit to the meetings of the Western Quarter;—I received the approbation of our Monthly-meeting in the First month. * * *

In this little tour we enjoyed entire harmony of feeling, both in the social and religious part of it, though we had to encounter something which it is better not to commit to paper. All these things, I find, are of little or no consequence to me when they are

past ; the motive that I have had being simply to do my duty, whatever attends me therein ; whether good or bad (so called,) I feel to receive as arising out of the nature of things, and all equally beneficial in their time and place. And here I understand the application of a language in Scripture : " Oh ! that my people were wise ; that they would consider this : often to think of their latter end," (or last end,) the object of all our hopes and wishes. The last and highest end of our desires is happiness, which is distinguished by everlasting happiness, as that will endure forever. To come then to the simple point of fearing God and keeping his commandments, or, in other words, so have our wishes and desires circumscribed within the limits of the present moment—we come to be released from anxiety as to how we shall fare on the morrow, and finding herein that to do the best we can at the present makes way for the future ; and by a right understanding of this, there is ability furnished to improve therein, and thus the kingdom of Heaven is within the sphere of our comprehension and attainment. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Plumstead, 11th mo. 30, 1831.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * I suppose rumor has been loud afar off, as it has been near home, respecting

me ; but it is long since its slanderous tongue has had any effect upon my feelings, except to add still further to the many evidences we have had, how much mankind, in an unregenerate state, are disposed to leave their own vineyards in neglect, to look after those of their neighbors ; also how entirely incapable such are of comprehending the purposes of those whose time and talents are no longer at their own control.

12TH MO. 13.—I take up the pen in order to finish this letter ; for recollections of my neglect continually reproach me therewith. It is mostly an effort for me to write upon subjects relating to Society, as I deem it important that what is put upon paper, of a sentimental character, should be substantially useful ; and feeling to have lost the idea that a sub-society, with all its operations, can be of much more use to the universal society of mankind, I do not attach much consequence to them in any way, and none as to myself. Reformation after reformation has already shown us, that those bodies, shortly after stepping out of the *mother church* and establishing themselves in power, begin to practice upon their own members what they felt to be oppressive, and for which they had come out from under the yoke ; that such is the light and intelligence of mankind at this day, that each one who is faithful may see the importance of standing upon their own feet, and walking erect, instead of leaning upon others or lingering with the multitude. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXIX.

Plumstead, 5th mo. 3, 1832.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * * Thee mentions E. H. being in New-York. I can wish him God speed, for whatever his private sentiments as to the practical operation of internal light may be, I trust it must always be a leading point in his preaching; and if he should sometimes deny it when it comes forth, because of the place or manner of its appearance, it is no more than others before him have done who were highly gifted in the light of prophecy; and I rather think with Paul, that I rejoice "if Christ be preached, even through contention and strife," hoping there will always be discriminating minds amongst the hearers, who will catch the truth, and gather the wheat that falls, although there may be an almost beclouding quantity of chaff blowing around. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXX.

Plumstead, 5th mo. 17, 1832.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * If I go to New-York, I should be at least on my way as far as Greenville, and that is now my prospect; though from the entire silence on the subject in thy last, I conclude thee thinks there is nothing auspicious to be expected in New York from such a visit. But as to my-

self, I find such an abstractedness of mind, that the whole world appears to be out of view, and I stand accountable as a moral agent to God alone ; that as such an agent to such a Power, or vested with such a trust, the work of the soul's salvation, or the securing of eternal substance by the means given, is the work of *my day*. And shall I, coward like, forsake the path of duty, and enquire of a frowning world whether I had better act up to the trust, or turn traitor and embezzle the Master's goods, his rightful due ; or, taking that portion of them which He giveth me into a far country, riot thereon in the smiles of Society favor and the transient gleam of worldly applause ? I feel not the slightest temptation to such a step, and amidst the jar that fills the streets of Babylon, hear not, and amidst all the wares of her merchants, see nothing inviting. One entire calm pervades my mind as to the result thereof, and I unite with thy views, as expressed in thy last, respecting the utility of the venerable old fabric. Whilst there is one corner of one of its most extended wings that will shelter the lame, the halt and the blind with safety, I say, let it stand. It seems almost as though this last solitary refuge would be destroyed by the misguided zeal of those who are striving to sustain the entire pile. Thus their veneration for the decayed parts, may endanger that which is yet sound. * * * * *

I have wandered widely from the subject upon which I commenced, but would not have

thee suppose that this digression is the result of any distrust of thy entire good will and regard for the welfare of thy sister, but rather conclude that business of greater importance than religious squabbles have occupied thy attention. *

* * I shall probably leave home on Fourth-day, and shall be pleased, on my arrival at New-York, to meet thee on the wharf, or, if it will suit thy convenience, at New Brunswick.

M. S

LETTER LXXXI.

Plumstead, 8th mo. 1, 1832.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * * We have been looking with some anxiety for more than a week for a letter from thee, until this evening we heard one had been received by Dr. Wilson, bearing intelligence of the death of Dr. H., a stroke which I suppose must fall heavy upon thy feelings, and has somewhat aroused our apprehensions for thy safety; and although, as I observed in a former letter, the health of our neighborhood holds out no very flattering inducement as a retreat, yet from Dr. Stephens's remarks, there is reason to hope that Cholera will not find subjects much exposed to its assaults, in the free, open atmosphere of the country. * * *

8TH MO. 2.—This day I received thine of the 30th of last month, the reading of which has deeply affected my feelings, from experimental

knowledge of the emotions occasioned by losing a near and intimate friend, one whose mental endowments and habits of life rendered her both an ornament and valuable member of the community. Such, as those who best knew her can testify, was Sarah, wife of H. B. E.; and even at this distant period, the blank that is left in society by her removal, at times, when brought into view, casts a shade of sorrow over my mind which is followed by a copious flow of sympathy. From the character thee gives of thy late friend, Dr. H., it appears like a promising fruit-tree suddenly torn up and destroyed by a ruthless tornado. Such losses continue to be felt, long after the circumstances which produced them have been forgotten. The separation from those whose attractive virtues have entwined them intimately into our better feelings, in despite of our firmest philosophy and fullest belief in the propriety of all the dispensations of Providence, our weaker natures often mourn, as for a severed limb. But I will leave the touching subject. The present time emphatically recalls the language—"Weep not for those that are gone, but for those that remain;" if there is indeed any time to stand and weep. It has been with me for some weeks past rather a time of serious, sober perseverance in social and domestic duties. I have for years believed it of the greatest moment, that our day's work be done in the day time; and thus if obedience keep pace with knowledge, we shall none of us have any thing

to fear from Death, but can rather look to it as a rest for the soul, wearied with the toils, anxieties and vicissitudes inseparable from its tenure in an earthly tabernacle, finds repose on the pillowed feeling of having been faithful to the best of its ability.

M. S.

LETTER LXXXII.

Plumstead, 12th mo. 20, 1832.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * Worldly cares break in and derange that fitness of things, which, if uninterrupted, would render the moral world an Eden. So delicate is that finely constructed musical instrument, the human mind, that the least touch of a key out of the right order, disturbs the melody; hence so much discord and mangling (if I may so term it,) instead of that musical harmony which soothes and softens the passions, refines the feelings and exalts the heart. There can be no study more interesting than the construction thereof; and for man to become intimately acquainted with the nature of his own mind, and to keep it properly attuned, is certainly accomplishing the end of his being; that true indeed is one of the answers in the Catechism: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him"—corresponding also with a passage in Scripture: "O! that my people were wise; that they would consider this, often to think of their latter end." The latter or ultimate end of man's peculiar cha-

racter and endowments being happiness, to become fully acquainted with his mental powers, and to concentrate them all upon the one grand point, is to glorify or display the greatness of that First Cause, or moving principle of intelligence, called God, and thus called because it is the supreme object of love and veneration to every enlightened mind. Hence the substantial enjoyment arising from the true understanding and application of his immortal powers; and thus we see the importance of every preliminary step, as "O! that my people were wise," &c.—that they would be wise enough to ponder the letters of the spiritual alphabet, and become capable of recognizing them at the first glance, however complicated and interwoven into words and sentences, or in more simple terms, attend to those innate impressions which bring a sensible degree of satisfaction to the mind. Thus, by strict attention and obedience, the spiritual or mental sense of feeling becomes so quick, that they are readily understood, and so the slightest deviation is perceived by the discord, or sense of sadness, that is felt. In this way, I conceive, we may account for many of the actions of the newly awakened, where things are done seemingly unimportant, and oft times insignificant, to those around, yet of the highest consequence to the child of faith; and, to return to the simile of the music, the characters or signs on the note-book, I suppose all teach the variety of keys required to make up one harmonious whole. It is some-

what singular that such a comparison should present, but it did so in that way that I never disregard without compunction. * * *

Now, when we consider the progress of measures taken for the help and amendment of society, that a resort to committees has been the last pacific resource, we have every reason to believe that some momentous issue awaits us. And here I break in upon the subject to acknowledge the gratitude I feel in that my hold on society is broken off, and that the confidence I once had in the building is now transferred to the great Builder alone ; that let what come that may in a collective capacity, the glorious privilege of individual labor, and the blessed reward of individual faithfulness, remains to us all. *

* * * * * M. S.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Plumstead, 6th mo. 16, 1833.

DEAR BROTHER :

* * * I have been this afternoon to a meeting appointed by one of the Christian brethren, at a school-house in Milton ; but the house being too small to contain the audience, we sat under the shade of the trees, and had a solemn, instructive meeting. There is a peculiar felicity of feeling when we meet as brethren under the broad canopy of heaven, or within walls unknown to the rigid rules of sectarian order. If the speaker, too, is unbiassed by them, the train

of his discourse, harmonising with feelings of pure and untrammelled devotion, leads the mind imperceptibly away from those sensations which are so foreign to the benign influence of the gospel. * * * * *

I was interested in the concerns of your Yearly-meeting, which thou had the kindness to communicate to me, but was surprised to find still remaining such traces of superstitious veneration for a yearly which I have long since travelled out of or lost. But so it is with us;—on a cursory view we are almost astonished to find that others do not see and feel just as we do, when a moment's reflection silences the busy "meddler with other people's concerns," and we travel on in the sphere of our own.

Our Quarterly-meeting was the most uninteresting I ever remember to have sat in. It was mostly silent, except the reading of the extracts, and a labored general epistle from the Yearly-meeting. The evident decline of life in those letter-learned essays, as well as the whole of our established system, is manifest, like every thing else in created nature subject to decline, and methinks all that is wanting to reconcile the people to their dissolution, is a right understanding thereof; and not taking this view of it, many are mourning, and lamenting, like "women weeping for Tamar." Anxious to find out the cause, the more sincere-hearted are ready to conclude the fault is in themselves, and go with their heads bowed down like a bulrush. Others

lay the fault upon their fellow travellers, for the neglect of duty, and the observance of the rites comparable to "days and times;" and hence the pure stream of light and intelligence has to make its progress through bogs, quagmires, rocks and rubbish of the various dispositions of which the human mind is composed. Yet, glorious hope, or rather glorified certainty, through these it is working its way, like the gentle but powerful stream from a living spring, to the vast ocean from which it is originally supplied. M. S.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Philadelphia, 9th mo. 17, 1833.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * The subject alluded to in thy last, that has agitated our Society in a particular manner, and seems to have excited considerable interest in the public mind, is one that has never claimed a serious thought of mine. The decision may be fraught with important consequences to general society, in which we must all partake. If judicial decisions should deprive us of all our places of worship, (so called,) those decisions cannot interfere with the hallowed temple of the heart, and that is the only place of worship that I believe in. Therefore, for myself, I have nothing to fear, but a common sympathy for those to whom the loss of the outer court would be like the loss of the right eye or arm. Trusting in that power which rightly regulates all things,

I can see that those very idols are what must be destroyed; and those pleasant places, the groves that must be cut down, in order to establish the true worship of the living God. * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXXV.

Plumstead, 3d mo. 22, 1835.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * Well, the winter season has passed away, but we hear little as yet of the singing of birds, only occasionally, for a day or two. The winter season is one of peculiar enjoyment to me, and I look back with pleasure to the past one, in which the cares of a family composed of fifteen, sink into oblivion, and the hours during the day, snatched from more active duties, to sit and sew by the window, in a comfortable room, the long evenings, and mornings lengthened by rising from one to two hours before the sun,—only remain as happy mementos of cares and comforts concentrated to the narrow confines of in-door existence. Every season of the year is exquisitely charming, but the widespread cares of spring and summer take off something from the enjoyment of those seasons, whilst the outward dreariness of winter is compensated by the opportunity afforded for retirement and reflection. It appears to me that the winter of life must partake of that kind of serene enjoyment, to those whose time and talents have been rightly employed.

M. S.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Plumstead, 8th mo. 23, 1835.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * Thy reference to P. for information respecting any subject of importance which may have recently occurred in Society, bespeaks a declining interest on thy part, upon those topics, perhaps about equal to my own; for, in fact, when at home, my domestic duties so entirely engross my attention, that I rarely think of them enough to ask questions and attend to the answers. When I consider the vast revolution that has taken place in the little sphere of my own mind in that respect, I am induced to examine the ground minutely upon which I now stand; and under the examination, I have seen, that having made every sacrifice that was called for, and performed every duty required, to the best of my understanding and ability, in my earlier years, I now feel it a great blessing to be released therefrom and left at liberty to attend to those temporal duties which I once could and did relinquish for the higher ones of a more spiritual nature. And though my heart occasionally expands with a prospective view of distant friends and distant lands, with the glorious testimony of light, liberty and truth, yet not feeling the expediency of permanently going forth with that testimony, the mind returns as to an anchor in port, the hope and the belief that kindred spirits commingle, the world over, and that the testimony above is being proclaimed and will be

proclaimed, though I may not again pass the threshold of my door on such a mission. * *

24TH—EVENING.—Having accomplished the business of the day, I lop a few minutes from my pillow to finish this letter. We have some most appalling accounts in our late papers respecting the riots in Baltimore, of which thou art doubtless apprised through the same channel. I do not feel any comment to make on the subject. An account of the destructive fires in your city, I also read in the same paper, and was thinking, whilst I was reading, whether any of thy particular friends were sufferers. But some one's friends were, most certainly ; and making the case our own will teach us to feel for all the afflicted as brethren. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Solebury, 9th mo. 10, 1836.

DEAR BROTHER :

Again my mind has come to the point of addressing thee through this medium. But what shall I say ? To go back and retrace the past for several months, I fear, would require more nerve than I have at command ; for I must acknowledge that the severing from that chain which encircles our natural affections on earth, (alluded to in thy sympathising letter of 8th mo.,) the interesting link of a daughter, whose every virtue appeared to expand with her de-

clining health, and whose real worth shone forth in more conspicuous colors with her setting sun, has shaken my fortitude to the last degree ; yet when I contemplate her tranquil decline and close, the many cares, anxieties and penalties inseparable from this state of existence, from which she is now removed, there is nothing but joy and gladness on her account. Still, the affecting recollection of every scene in which she acted a part, or was in some way connected, seems to revive with increased force, as thoughts of her sufferings fade away in the distance of time. The lone situation of her companion, too, thus widowed ere his twenty-fifth year was completed—but it is useless to dwell upon subjects which thus press upon the affections. * * *

M. S.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Solebury, 9th mo. 12, 1836.

MY ESTEEMED COUSIN :

* * * * My next apology is that our daughter, whose declining health had claimed much of my attention during the last winter, and exclusively so from the first week in the Fifth month, deceased in two days after I received it.

Her mind had appeared to be uniformly tranquil, and, we have reason to believe, prepared for the event that ensued. Her close was solemnly serene, and for her we have cause to

rejoice. But the severing of such a link in the chain of human connections, proved more keenly affecting than I had anticipated, and my mind seemed constrained to yield its stronger energies, for a time, to the influence of the affections. She had been married about eighteen months to an interesting companion, whose youth, and consequent inexperience in the vicissitudes of life, render him, in a peculiar manner, an object of our deepest sympathy and solicitude. But he has been abundantly favored with the fortitude of a Christian, under a bereavement, which, in anticipation, he almost concluded would be insupportable. Her age was twenty-one years, two months and two weeks. * * *

And now, with respect to the momentous subject which involves the happiness of millions now in existence and millions yet unborn, what can we say? Though I fully unite with thee in disapproving the position which some appear to take, of keeping still, because of the excitement, which they are pleased to term the whirlwind and fire, I believe with them, and rejoice in it, that oppression will cease as regards African slavery, and they will be free. But as to such an event coming about without the requisite means, or without excitement, it is not to be expected. On the contrary, in the very nature of things, that keen sense of wrong implanted in the rational mind by its beneficent Creator, must ever rise indignant in proportion as that wrong becomes manifest. Hence all the zeal that has

ever been manifested in the great work of reform of every description. Hence that unyielding perseverance in Jesus of Nazareth, which led him to the cross, and gave to the world of mankind an example of unswerving adherence to the path of known duty. And it might be well for some that recommend stillness (which seems in the common acceptation of the term to imply a listless inactivity on the part of man) so strenuously to others, because of some reason or other which, no doubt, they think well founded, to set the example entirely, and say nothing on either side.

There were some remarks made in one of our committee-meetings last spring, which forcibly revived in my memory Mordecai's reply to Esther, when the lives of her countrymen were at stake, and he had proposed that she should use her influence with the king for the repeal of an edict to that effect. She, fearing the king's displeasure if she should presume to approach him without a certain signal in the royal order, plead her excuse. But mark the spirited manner in which she was reprov'd; "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape, in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" And we may remark the

happy consequences resulting from the course she took. That while I disunite with every thing like that fearful apprehension of mind which recognizes giants and anakims in every appearance that has not been fully tested by experience, I approve of each individual proving for himself the firmness of the ground, by setting his foot thereon before he trusts his whole weight. And as the sincere mind is always on the watchtower, it marks every movement of importance in its different subjects, and hence receives a qualification to act with promptness and decision, agreeably to the necessities of the case.

There are certain temperaments in the human family, which take fire as it were at the opposition or apathy which they discover in others with regard to some all-absorbing subject. When people go about to prevent excitement, they would do well to study the best means for doing it, or they may doubly increase the ferment, while they suppose themselves in the act of allaying it.

The interest I took in the subject last spring was quite involuntary, or rather the active steps I took therein; and it is possible I may not again see cause publicly to identify myself with the Abolitionists; but the testimony I have long held against slavery and oppression, if carried out, strikes at the very root of the matter; but there is where some of us fail, and balk the testimony, in our religious orders, in our every day

intercourse with men, or our domestic circle. In the present imperfect order of things, there is much to deplore, yet we certainly shall not advance much in reform, either as respects Society errors or self defects, if we stand contemplating them too much. The path of improvement leads *on*, as said Christ, "Go and sin no more," and happily for mankind, there is no more required of them than to live aright in the present time. To-day, is the divine injunction, and "take no thought for the morrow; let the morrow take thought for the things of itself;" plainly indicating that the present moment is the time for us to occupy our talents, and to occupy them aright. The next moment, or the next circumstance that calls for our exertions of mind, or action of limb, truth will appear with greater or clearer light, as the nature of the case may require. Faith, confirmed in the hope of success, gives energy to the mind, and in that it rises above the difficulties at which it would otherwise stumble, or perhaps utterly fall. And now I would that all might be encouraged to persevere in what they find to do.

Affectionately, thy cousin,

M. S.

LETTER LXXXIX.

New-York, 4th mo. 28, 1837.

MY DEAR JANE :

The circumstance of a brother's indisposition required my attention in this city immediately

after my return home from Philadelphia ; in consequence of which, I was obliged to forego the satisfaction of attending our little Anti-Slavery meeting, which took place the same day I left Pennsylvania ; and also that of seeing and hearing C. C. Burleigh scattering the seeds of convictive evidence through our section of the country, in the powerful arguments he produces against slavery itself, as the corrupt tree, the branches and fruit of which being of the same nature, must or will of necessity, in the nature of things, bring forth all the consequences which facts and observation are continually spreading before the view of an awakened and awakening public. Those seeds being sown in the mind, require all the attention of its possessor, to cherish and bring them forth into view in effective action. And every thing in the order of nature goes to prove, not only the utility, but the absolute necessity, of co-operation as a means of carrying on the designs of our Creator. The same Power that has furnished the ground, sends forth his instruments to sow the seed—breaks forth with the warming influences of the sun, in the expansion of that feeling of benevolence and humanity which impels us to embrace every opportunity for mitigating the afflictions of our fellow beings. In this sympathy of feeling we have an evidence of our affinity, as children of one common Parent, the diffusion of whose divinity runs through the various channels of connection, as the vital stream, passing through the

heart of the animal system, invigorates and supports every member thereof. How corrupt and corrupting, then, has been and forever must be the influence that has gone to derange a system created to harmonise in all its parts. Behold, in the first instance, a disposition to counteract the divine command; next, an active acquiescence, by partaking of a forbidden thing; and how soon was it carried out in forcibly slaying what seemed to stand as an obstacle in the way of its full enjoyment. Here may be seen the origin, progress and end of a spirit that is emphatically called a liar and a murderer. Solemn, then, is the consideration, that this spirit of evil can only act through the medium of man, an intelligent, accountable being. If by watchfulness and prayer alone, then, we are to be preserved from becoming instruments in perverting the benevolent designs of Providence, we are most solemnly called upon so steadily to walk in that light which hath enlightened the understanding of man, as to perceive amid the various occurrences of the day in which we live, *what we have to do*. If, in such a walk, the leading concern of the mind is to do whatsoever is right, I must conclude there is no danger of being misled, but that the secret aspiration of the soul being thus: "Thy will, and not mine, be done"—the animal machine, together with the whole body of intellectual powers, will come into co-operation with the moving principle thereof, which is Love. But if instead of this, the fear of man, in any of its

transformations, have its seat in the mind, and rule there, then indeed are we in danger on every hand; in danger of strengthening the bonds of iniquity, in that our feet, our hands and our tongues are not used in bearing testimony against it; in danger of destroying our own peace, and forever closing the door of mercy on ourselves, by standing aloof when we might enter in thereat;—and thus, instead of realising a continual increase of light and understanding, of quietness and assurance in our minds, of faith and confidence in the power of truth, we voluntarily place ourselves on the ground where every opposite of those inestimable privileges may constantly assail us. These things I write as belonging or applicable to a mind that *has* an ear to hear the language of the spirit. And in consideration of these things, I have found it both needful and expedient to avail myself of every opportunity of getting information that may confirm my faith herein, as regards the Anti-Slavery cause. In this, many steps that I have taken may seem to be merely casual, and to gratify a curiosity to hear; but they have been, in fact, to me, acts of religious duty; for such I am bound to consider every duty devolving on one who duly considers his or her ways. And however slight the impression may have been, in every instance I have met with an ample reward.

* * * * * The three books particularly named for my own perusal, I brought with

me, and found much enjoyment in reading them to my brother and another friend, unto whom I found freedom to introduce the subject. For, my dear J., in most places where I have called amongst my acquaintances, I have not found that freedom. Why it is so, perhaps we have not need to inquire. There is a peculiar gratification in finding those we love, and with whom we have fellowship in some things, united with us in ALL things wherein we feel a deep interest. Perhaps this is not always best for us, as by being disappointed herein, we may be brought into an acquaintance with others of the fold and flock of Christ, and thus, as such acquaintance increases, our views may become enlarged, and our hearts expanded, into regions of society we had otherwise never known.

There is every reason to suppose I shall remain here, on my brother's account, until after the A. S. Convention. If so, I shall rejoice in that circumstance, as something of a counterbalance to those I have to regret herein. I would now desire heartily to congratulate those devoted sisters, A. E. and S. M. Grimke, in that they have given themselves up for the promotion of a cause that is evilly spoken of, and that, too, in a way that the superficial, the worldly, and the sectarian, seem to stand prepared to condemn; hoping that whereunto they have attained, they may continue to walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing.

M. S.

LETTER XC.

Kimberton, 3d mo. 10, 1838.

MY DEAR FAMILY:

* * * * We have been blessed beyond what we could have asked, in meeting that welcome, wherever we have come, that makes us feel at once at home;—in finding also an entrance to the hearts of the people when assembled. And though I have rarely found myself on a journey of this kind before, in which I had not a more distinct view given of each day's work or destination before it arrived, yet I never felt more calm in resting in the present moment. * * * * *

M. S.

LETTER XCI.

Plumstead, 7th mo. 11, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

We were much gratified yesterday by the receipt of a letter from thee, bearing post-mark of June 29; or rather, I may say, quite disappointed in the reading of it, to find nothing about Matilda, or any other earthly subject. And though thou wast in New-York at the time of the Yearly-meeting, and no doubt heard somewhat of its transactions—not one word thereon; not even to say how they get along at that, or any other time, without P. I. Merritt, whose loss I thought the Friends of that Monthly-meeting would feel very sensibly, as she appeared to stand in the

gap between rigid disciplinarians and those who happened to offend against them. Not a word about our dear friends Anna and Martha Leferts, in their bereaved state; neither of thy own family, in whose welfare we feel a particular interest. But, for myself, I can excuse thy silence on those subjects, seeing thy mind is all engrossed on what, from thy writing, would appear to be an entirely new subject, and of which I should be glad to hear something more from thee. Is it really new to thy mind, that the attributes of Deity, as displayed in the life and character of Jesus, really and substantially testify of him as the first-born of many brethren, or the first representative of the church, in whom was begotten, or in whom dwelt, that perfect love that enabled him to withstand the temptations unto which humanity is liable; therein evincing to a dark and bewildered world, that the same doctrine which was implied in the law given to Adam in Eden, was the alone way of salvation. Hence, to those who had fallen under the curse, or in consequence of the state of things brought about by his failure, or disobedience, that world of sin and iniquity in which mankind has become involved. To such, the adoption of that doctrine or law became, and still becomes, the only way of redemption. Hence the adorable Jesus stands the one mediator, or visible and sensible medium, by which the rational mind comes to a knowledge of God. By embracing his doctrines and obeying his precepts, we come

into union and communion with him. Hence the testimony of Paul: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Hence that abhorrence and loathing of the soul (that has come to an understanding of these things) for every thing of an opposite nature; and hence that longing to depart therefrom, and to be with, or conformed wholly to, Christ.

But if thy views have changed on that subject, why is it necessary for thee to change position, that is, join thyself to the Orthodox? If thou hast received thy views under the ministry of J. J. G., is that an evidence that they alone hold the true doctrine? For my own part, though I have had serious doubts for some time, as to whether our Friends have a right understanding of the character and office of Jesus of Nazareth, yet I have as much doubt as to the Orthodox understanding it essentially. Therefore, unless the path of duty lead thee thereunto, I hope thou wilt be preserved from changing in such a way as would seem to manifest instability. During a visit of a few weeks last winter and spring in some parts of Chester county, I was favored with an insight into that subject, which I had been longing for, for years; and if thou wert here, I should love to converse with thee about it.

We had looked somewhat for thee this summer, and whenever thou feels it in the way of commission or permission, I hope thou wilt find a door of entrance into our house. It is cheer-

ing to find thou still feels an interest in the cause of the down-trodden slave.

I now close, and desire thee to write again if thee feels to do so, as I trust thou wilt never have any thing to communicate in that way, which will not be interesting to thy friend,

M. S.

LETTER XCII.

Plumstead, 8th mo. 10, 1838.

DEAR P.:

It was pleasing to receive an answer to my last so early as the fifth of this month, and also the matter it contained ; and if it were possible to receive in writing, or rather to understand by writing, the views and sentiments of another as clearly as they can be conveyed by questions and answers, I would take this method of comparing views ; for I have been very desirous of having the sentiments of a candid Orthodox on the character of Christ ; but will rather postpone it until thou comes, which, if thou art ready to do, our family will all welcome thee, I trust ; and I do not suppose any of thy friends will look much askance at thee, if thou dost not at them. I saw J. and M. Magill since receiving thy last, and told them of the reception of both letters, but not of their contents, save what related to the lectures thou mentioned. I shall let them have the perusal of both when convenient, which will probably be on the 18th, as our Anti-Slavery

meeting takes place on that day, and they attend. I suppose they will be astonished as much as our girls were, to hear that P. has turned Orthodox. If thou hadst been a little more explicit about those lectures, and as to how they were received by the people, and especially by the Friends (so called,) it would have been more gratifying. I cannot say much about the increase of interest on the subject of Abolition amongst the people at large, in this part of the country; but for myself, slavery appears to be so directly opposite to the doctrines of the gospel, to sound policy, and even self-interest of the master, that it only wants to be seen as it really is, to make it loathsome in the extreme to every rational mind.

Thou hast no doubt read the account of the transactions in Philadelphia last Fifth month, at which time the purpose of many was entirely diverted from its object, in that there was no place found for the Free-Produce convention to meet. It now appears there is a call for it again on the fifth of next month.

My views on that subject have changed decidedly, and it appears quite inconsistent for Abolitionists to be living on the gain of oppression; that while we disavow the principle of inducing the masters to release the slaves from motives of interest, we also show by our actions that we are not influenced by self-interest in procuring the fruit of his unrequited labors, because it is cheaper than the other.

I may now tell thee, my sphere of action has been considerably enlarged since I saw thee ;— attended Baltimore Yearly-meeting last fall ; also a number of meetings in the course of the winter, a distance from home, and am now preparing to attend Indiana Yearly-meeting ; should have been glad of thy assistance, both spiritually and temporally, if thou had seen it in thy way to be with us ; shall set out, if permitted in the truth, the fourth of next month, and perhaps not return till the Eleventh month. Now, in case thou favors me with another letter, please be a little more explicit, and tell me whether thou attends meeting, where, and how received. With unabated love for thee and thy near connexions, for want of more time, I must conclude, and remain thy friend. M. S.

LETTER XCIII.

Columbiana Co., O., 12th mo. 16, 1838.

MY DEAR HUSBAND:

Although in the midst of the preparations for getting away from home there was nothing said about writing, and the uncertainty of letters arriving as intended has almost discouraged me, yet feeling thee, with our dear children, this evening brought very near, it is with me to communicate in this way some of the particulars of our journey, not doubting that your thoughts have been much with us, as mine have been with you. But I am often reminded that I must resign you

all, and every thing else that can be taken from me, seeing that all my efforts to bring heaven and earth together, or in other words, all the efforts that I have made (which have been many) to serve the great Master in the way that the world approves, have been marked by disappointment; and I greatly fear that most, if not all the difficulties that we have had to contend with in our domestic concerns, are traceable to this cause; for I well remember when the injunction was impressed upon my mind before I was settled in life—"Seek first the kingdom of Heaven and the righteousness thereof, and all things necessary shall be added." When I remember the past, survey the present, or look to the future, all I can ask for you is the protection and direction of Divine Providence; all I can ask for myself, is to become more conformed to the Heavenly Father's will. * * *

M. S.

LETTER XCIV.

Plumstead, 3d mo. 18, 1839.

MY DEAR P.:

* * * How is it thou hast not written to me again? I should like to hear how thou art getting along with thy (supposed) new faith. I say supposed, because I can recollect the clearness of thy doctrine on the saving power of gospel love, long since; and it appears to me the only change that has taken place in thy mind is,

that thy understanding has perceived the fact, that Jesus was the first medium to the world of mankind for illustrating, both by precept and example, the extent thereof; and that love becoming predominant in man over every other love or lust, producing entire obedience of all the powers of mind, chastening the affections, subduing the passions and curbing the appetites common to the animal nature, is what we call the new birth, Christ in you, the hope of glory—the same that subdues the natural will, with all its runnings to and fro; its anxieties to do something for the good cause, (professedly;) its voluntary sacrifices, and its thousands of turnings and twinings, (serpent like.) This will being thus surrendered, man comes to see that Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, worketh in him, both to will and to do, according to his own good pleasure.

I fully concur with thee in ascribing falsity to the expression that is often used, “that we know enough;” and perhaps this mistaken idea of knowledge is the greatest hindrance that prevents our coming to the true knowledge, in that it prevents our seeking for it. Please write soon (if thou art not coming in person,) to thy friend in faith,

M. S.

How is the great cause of humanity progressing among you? I trust it is gaining ground, though slowly, here.

LETTER XCV.

Scottsville, N. Y., 6th mo. 24, 1839.

MY DEAR HUSBAND AND CHILDREN :

* * * * * You have continued to be the companions of my thoughts from day to day, and an earnest desire for your preservation, amidst the conflicting cares of business, dwells with me so much that my sleeping hours are often occupied with dreams of an unpleasant nature. Whether these things are suffered in order more effectually to wean me from those objects which cling closer and closer to my selfish nature, or whether they have their origin in that sympathy to which our mental constitution is peculiarly adapted, and which renders us capable of feeling for, and thus in some measure bearing, one another's burthens in the social compact and necessary concerns of life, I cannot fully decide. But thus much I do know : that feeling to be in my own proper place, I must leave you all to the superintending care of that Providence who watched over and preserved *me*, long before I was justly sensible thereof.

* * * * * I omitted to mention that we lodged on Fifth-day night at I. Post's, in Rochester. He and his wife were with us next day at B. Reighneif's. They are decided Abolitionists. Friends where we have been, with a very few exceptions, practice, as far as they can, on the principle of abstinence from the products of slave labor. They appear much more engaged,

as a body, on the subject, than in our part of the country. A public lecture was given on Fourth-day afternoon of the Yearly-meeting week, in our part of the meeting-house. A large committee at the same time was sitting in the other part, to consider of a memorial that had been sent from one of the subordinate meetings to the Yearly-meeting for its sanction, and designed to be directed from the Yearly-meeting down to all the subordinate meetings, for members to sign individually, then to be sent to the Meeting for Sufferings, and by it forwarded to the Senate and House of Representatives, praying for all that the two Houses have power *to do*, to be done, on the subject of slavery. I attended with them. It was an interesting meeting, and after a free expression of sentiments respecting it, a sub-committee was appointed to make some alterations in the memorial, which was afterward attended to, and the Yearly-meeting decided upon, authorising the clerks of both meetings to sign it on behalf thereof. * * * M. S.

[The following letters, with the exception of the last three, were written during a journey to Ohio and Indiana.]

LETTER XCVI.

Valley, 9th mo. 6, 1839.

MY DEAR HUSBAND :

After a safe and steady drive, we are here. The sun's last rays shone amongst the clouds in

the west as we passed the meeting-house and turned towards Joseph Walker's, which is within call thereof. Have spent the evening partly in listening to a written account of his son Isaac, a young man twenty-five years of age, who deceased two weeks since; and partly in conversing on the responsibility that rests upon mortals for the right occupation of the time and talents with which they are blessed. May my dear children be made duly sensible thereof in early life, is my prayer for them; and this can only be effected by the all-powerful influence of divine love, drawing the mind to the great fountain or source of Good, and then giving it an understanding of the things that make for peace. My mind has felt solemnized this afternoon, and this text of Scripture has several times run through it: "Let not him that putteth on the harness boast himself as him that putteth it off." There is consolation felt in knowing that all pertaining to this world, even to my dear family, has been given up on the present occasion, for the sake of, and in the hope of, the gospel of Jesus Christ. * * *

M. S.

LETTER XC VII.

9th mo. 28, 1839.

MY DEAR HUSBAND:

* * * * * Attended Select meeting. Mourning and lamentation was the language of some of the members. For my part I felt no-

thing like it. The cloud that had rested on the tabernacle before me, on the way, being removed, I saw the way open, and read the positive, though persuasive language: "Speak to my people, that they go forward." * * *

Yesterday received a letter from home, the contents of which, excepting the part relating to mother, were very gratifying. I have always had a strong desire (if it might be permitted,) to be with her and have the care of her in her last days, and especially if she became helpless; so that the intelligence of her increased debility is very afflicting. But I do not see that I can do otherwise, situated as I am, than to attend to the concern, by which I was constrained, after weighing all the probable and apparent consequences, to leave them in that Hand upon which I felt, and still feel, to lean for support. Give my kind love to her. I trust she will be well attended to, and well satisfied where she is. The accounts of my children and domestic concerns are a renewed confirmation that they are much better without me than when I am at home and not in my right place. * * *

9TH MO. 30.—The Yearly-meeting convened. Priscilla Cadwallader took a seat by my side, rather late, not being able to leave her bed long at a time. A view of the great and only difficulty that stands in the way of our getting along aright under every circumstance, being the *unsubjected will of man*, presented before me, upon

which I arose, and as the subject enlarged, embracing the Yearly-meeting and its concerns, relieved my mind, and thus cleared my own way in a few expressions ; after which, Priscilla expressed her unity, and continued enlarging on the same subject, in the same powerful manner that we have heard her in times that are past. Her ministry had at this time, as at others, the tendency to turn my thoughts directly inward, to examine my own standing. There is a great deal that we hear amongst us, in the line of the ministry, that leads the mind around the contracted circle of our Society, without seeming to give it one glimpse of light beyond. There is another kind, (which we hear too little of,) that expands it in light and love to the utmost bounds of the habitable globe. Of these three kinds, the first and the last are to me the true gospel ministry. The other may have its use, for aught I know, as one of the preparatory means of Divine Providence in instructing the minds of some, but I fear it is greatly impeding the individual progress of many. Priscilla left immediately after speaking, informing us that her health would not permit her remaining. After the minutes for Miriam and myself were read, it was proposed that "if the Friends had a desire to go into the men's meeting, the way was open"—which paved the way for what occurred to me, as a requisite step. Accordingly, accompanied Lydia Plummer, and relieved my mind, without occupying much time. This session of the

Yearly-meeting was conducted harmoniously, the liberty of truth extending over it.

THIRD-DAY, 10TH MO. 1.—Felt great freedom in participating with Friends, during a long session. The queries were all read and answered, pretty much in the way that we have been accustomed to hear them. After its close, sat a committee of the Yearly-meeting that has had the care of the African concerns, (so called,) for several years, which is to assist the colored people in schooling their children. There was evidence of considerable life in the cause; and a proposition to extend the exertions of said committee further, and embrace a larger field of labor, called forth the expression of sentiment in several to that end, but finally gave way to the conclusion that, as a committee of the Yearly-meeting, they were not warranted in so doing.

The prospect in regard to the abolition subject is by no means discouraging. The ground is being broken up, and although there are some, or rather, I may say, many, of the old trees and stumps standing, there is preparation making that the seed may be cast in; and when once sown, there is no fear but it will take root and grow in many minds. Indeed, there is no reason to doubt the final success of this cause every where, seeing it is so good a one. I feel much interest in our little Society at home, and desire its members may be diligent in stirring each other up, and circulating information among others, as way may open. I find the subject

more and more pressing upon me in connection with preaching the gospel, and that in so doing all opposition appears to have been borne down, and some who had been considered as decidedly averse to hearing any thing respecting it, have manifested cordiality, and some expressed unity afterward. * * * * *

FIFTH-DAY, 3D.—This day closed the Yearly-meeting. It was one of deep exercise of feeling, in which truth arose triumphant over all, I believe, in many minds. One young woman, in a sweet and solemn tone, with great deliberation, testified what she had felt, and openly covenanted with her God, to serve Him, praying for his preserving care, and desiring that others might come to him. Another, apparently further advanced in life, in a lively manner testified to the renewal of faith she had felt, and encouraged others to seek for it; spake of the preservation she had witnessed in a remote wilderness, while her husband was engaged in promoting the anti-slavery cause; and the confidence she had felt in leaving her children on the present occasion. But to form a conception of the real state of things, one must have been present. The effect, however, may be compared to a copious shower of rain in a thirsty land, which, though in the swelling of the streams they were somewhat muddy, yet this flowing off, leaves them clear; and the springs having received a replenishing from the great fountain, the whole land begins to revive, verdure clothes the fields, and the face of nature

wears a smile. Such, I am persuaded, it will be through the limits of this Yearly-meeting. The sleep of death on the subject of human rights is broken up, and some minds have arisen out of the grave and are preparing to enter into labor. * * * * *

If my last letter was received, I shall expect to get one at Green Plain, where we hope to arrive in a little more than a week. I am anxious to hear from mother, as well as the rest of you. Give my love to her, and receive all that a mother can commit to you, in desires for your peace and happiness; also as a wife, I remain most affectionately,
M. S.

LETTER XCVIII.

Waynesville, 12th mo. 8, 1839.

MY DEAR HUSBAND AND CHILDREN :

* * * * * Attended the Select meeting ; not very large, there being one or two Monthly-meetings in the Quarter that have no select body belonging to them. It was a season of eminent favor, in searching testimony as to the duty and responsibility of this part of Society, which testimony went over all opposition, if any was felt.

9TH.—The Quarterly-meeting was large, and favored with the same freedom in testimony, on general subjects, (amongst which the Anti-christian system of slavery was a prominent one,) as on the day previous. The spirit of opposition,

though aroused, as the sequel of the meeting manifested, was kept quite under the control of good order. Perhaps P. would say, on such an occasion, as some of the Disciples did formerly, "Lord, even the devils were subject to us in thy name;" which expression, when rightly understood, is altogether appropriate. The usual manner of expression on such occasions among Friends, has been, that "truth rose into dominion." For my own part, I find that when my own choice of things is given up, both as to manner, matter, time and place, that truth then rises into dominion in me, as an instrument, and whatever is done through the instrument, in that passive state, is in the power of truth, or in other language, by Jesus the *Saviour*. * * *

And now, though perhaps you are looking for us home, I must inform that it will be several weeks (most likely) before we can arrive. I had vainly striven to get through so as to reach home to assist in the press of business that presents to farmers' families at this season of the year; but have at length become reconciled to conform to what may be required from day to day. I get my bread as I go along, and have found way made to *proceed*, pretty much in the same manner, oftentimes not knowing one day what was to be done the next. Feel my trust in Providence, both for you and myself, renewed from time to time, or rather, an *abiding* trust. * * *

M. S.

LETTER XCIX.

12th mo. 28, 1839.

MY DEAR HUSBAND AND CHILDREN :

* * * * * Snowing and storming all day. Think ourselves well provided for, in that we are with kind friends.

29TH.—Completety storm-bound; roads full, fences drifted up, and still blo'ing. A few Friends worked their way with horses, oxen and sleds, to meeting. The oldest settlers here have never known such a drifted snow, though it is not supposed to be more than two feet deep on a level. We have, in the situation in which we are now placed, a fresh proof of our shortsightedness in what is really best for us, even as to temporal comfort; it having been extremely in the cross, to the natural affections of the heart, to make such a digression to the north, when we had been contemplating taking a tolerably direct course homeward, at the very time when, in addition to the various ties of filial, maternal and conjugal affection, considerations of temporal economy, and the probable inclemency of the season approaching, combined to strengthen the draught in that direction ;—for had we proceeded as contemplated when we left Berlin, we should, no doubt, have found ourselves thus hedged in amongst strangers and on expenses, perhaps on the bleak mountains where we found a deficiency in the genial comforts of life, even in the Ninth month. What, then, might we not had to en-

counter in the Twelfth! We are now amidst a little band of Friends, and numerous of other denominations, in whose minds the way appears opening for the testimonies of truth, in that way like unto the voice of "one crying in the wilderness:" and we are now only waiting for the roads to be opened so that the people can collect together to furnish the opportunity to declare of those things, which, when seen in the light of Christ, and ability felt which is in *him*, is meat and drink to the believer. * * * *

1st Mo. 10.—Again find my purpose thwarted, having contemplated leaving here (Brighton) to-day for Alleghany; but not finding liberty so to do, am waiting with *hope*, for I durst not say it is with *patience*. Those who have never known living one day at a time, cannot see any propriety in it, nor conceive why it should be so. For my own part, I have no doubt of its being the way best calculated to reduce me to that littleness which is necessary.

* * * I fully believe that when there is a strong desire for improvement in that way, it is important such desire should be gratified as far as possible; but if impossible, and the attention is turned to *self-cultivation*, such a mind may come into the school of Christ, and therein experience more real advantage than all other schooling in the world can confer without it. The studies of that school can be pursued in the midst of other avocations, as the *Teacher* will always be with us if we will attend to Him; yea,

is with us, though there may be so little attention paid to Him, that His instructions are unheard, and His rules unnoticed. That my children may become deeply learned therein, is my most solemn desire for them, and that they may apply such learning to the use designed. Less or more than this I have not presumed to ask at the Throne of Grace at any time for them; knowing that if we win Christ therein, we shall come to inherit all things. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER C.

St. Clear Township, Bedford Co., }
1st mo. 22, 1810. }

MY DEAR FRIEND :

My mind having been very often with thee, as also with some other dear friends in the same neighborhood, I have felt this afternoon to commune with you in this way.

Since we last parted, thy affectionate spirit has often seemed to be with me; and when visiting our valued friends the Dugdales, thy presence was all that was wanting to render it most excellent; for they were evidently disappointed in not seeing thee.

Thou wilt perhaps look for a sketch of history from me, but having written such a sketch, and sent it home, in several letters, the incidental part of my travels has passed away. The feelings that have generally attended my mind con-

tinue much the same. Finding my peace was no longer to be found at home, or in the things thereof, the determination took place in my thoughts, that if way was made for pursuing the journey then before me, I would give up to the guidance of the Master so long as He should keep it open. Accordingly, we set out. The point in view was Indiana Yearly-meeting. There was a great space of country lying before me, but what part of it was to be found accessible to the preaching of the gospel, without all the appendages that the *order* (so called) attaches to it, was unknown. My confidence was in Christ; a solemn weight rested on me, "not knowing what things should befall me." But on taking my seat in the Select meeting at Richmond, on Seventh-day morning, the burthen left me, and the mantle of Christ assumed its place, and that has continued to be the covering of my spirit since. Overspread with such a canopy, my head has been shielded in every battle that I have had with the fear of man. And this, I am thoroughly persuaded, is the greatest foe we have to guard against—the stronghold in which self becomes entrenched for safety, or the flimsy covering with which it seeks to screen the love of its *own life*. Nor do I believe we can ever get the victory over this, until Jesus Christ, the saving love of God, has full possession of the soul. Therefore, in every instance in which that fear is cast out, so that the action or actions wrought are devoid of it, it is in consequence of the superior preva-

lence of that love, under which nothing can be exalted but the Creator, because the creature is in subjection, and willingly so. Oh! my friend, how I long for the increase of that true humility that would grow out of the true and saving knowledge. How worse than useless would then appear the mock humility that stands in abundance of profession of it, and how insufficient the knowledge, which, we often hear said, is not wanting. My joy and rejoicing is continually in this, that it is increasing. The eye of faith beholds it as the effect of the same Saviour that operated formerly through the medium of one prepared body—now operating through thousands and tens of thousands of mediums of God's own preparing. It is being seen in His providences, in His mercies, and in that very retribution which ungodliness is producing in its own works and upon its workers.

MERION, 2D MO. 23.—At the time I wrote the above, my mind was forcibly drawn to relieve itself of the deep feeling of unity and sympathy that bound me to thyself and some others of my friends in Bucks county. Indeed, my cross has been in this separation, during the whole of the journey. My family and friends have been like a loadstone, tugging at my heart continually, and it was not until now that I could distinguish why it was so (exactly;) one reason for which is, that through those strong sympathies of our nature, we become more sensible of the moral sympathies that bind the children of men together every

where; and that because of the many counter-acting circumstances, all arising out of one cause, (selfishness,) suffering and sorrow abound, instead of love, joy, peace, &c.; that by a constant reference to these social feelings in myself, I am taught to feel with and for the afflicted every where, and especially for the slave and the slave mother and wife. * * * *

M. S.

LETTER CI.

Halfmoon Valley, Centre Co., Pa., }
1st mo. 27, 1840. }

MY DEAR HUSBAND AND CHILDREN:

* * * * * I suppose you may again be looking for us home; therefore feel somewhat for your disappointment. As to myself, having become inured thereto, happily, in this thing my neck is bent to the yoke; and though, one week since, I imagined (for it has proved nothing but imagination) that we should get home on First-day next, yet now am left totally uncertain as to the time that we may arrive. All the meetings that were before me when I set out, still stand as they did, and most likely we will remain and take them. My prayers are that we may all profit by these things. Hitherto, there has not been one step of my movements during this journey, that I could have bettered; and by watching as hitherto, from day to day, trust I shall return to you in peace. That the

same peace may be with you, now and ever, is the solemn prayer of my soul for you, in which I remain affectionately yours, M. S.

LETTER CII.

Solebury, 11th mo. 28, 1840.

DEAR BROTHER:

* * * I was preparing to return and finish my visit in New-York, but finding my health somewhat impaired by exertions made in my domestic affairs, I concluded to try a course of Thomsonian medicine; after which so much disease manifested itself about me, that I felt quite released from the prospect, and set about what I thought would repair the shattered bark, if any thing would. About the third week of my practice, our dear Martha Ann was brought from her brother's, on the farm, where she had remained, being unwell, apparently with a cold. She declined having a doctor, and in a few days proposed taking a course, which succeeded very well; but the disease being so insidious, and marked by no symptoms calculated to arouse our apprehensions of its malignant nature, and she much averse to taking the medicine, but more particularly owing to my inability to apply it, and consequently to urge it, the disease gradually progressed, till finally we sent for Dr. Smith. He came on the 15th, but found it what he pronounced almost a hopeless case, and so it shortly proved. On the night of the 18th, about half

past eleven, she passed away with perfect serenity, as one in a deep sleep; not a muscle of the face moved, nor a limb quivered. Thus another of the links of that chain which binds a parent's heart to earth is broken. * * *

M. S.

LETTER CIII.

Solebury, 12th mo. 17, 1840.

DEAR BROTHER :

I now take up the pen to relieve the anxiety I suppose thou must have been under for some weeks past. The truth is, I have not been able to write, having exhausted my remaining strength. During our dear child's last suffering hours, I found it necessary to enter upon a more active course of treatment in my own case, which has been attended with some further prostration of strength. I have at all times been able to sit up part of the day, and rest comfortably at night. I have had no acute pains. Weakness in the back, and inflammation in the tonsils and glands of the throat, are the characteristics of my complaint, with considerable debility of the nervous system. Whether these will yield to the Thomsonian practice, is yet to be seen; but thus far I am satisfied with having pursued it, and feel to await the issue with resignation, which I hope thou wilt do also. I have great cause to be thankful for the peace of mind and ease of body I have been blessed with. * * *

And now I have to advert to a subject of a

deep and solemn nature. Our long afflicted and beloved mother is no more. She had been for some days gradually sinking, and yesterday morning about four, she ceased to breathe—so quietly as to be almost imperceptible. I have been for three months prevented from seeing her, in consequence of my own ill health. Whilst we sensibly feel the separation of so tender a tie, we have cause to rejoice that she is relieved from her sufferings. She had so far outlived her mental faculties that we suppose she scarcely realized the approach of that change which she had long seemed to desire. I feel that I have written as much as my strength will bear; and now, in the faith that all that is good will be preserved, and the belief that all that is evil must perish, whether individually or in the world at large, I bid thee farewell. M. S.

[This letter, having been omitted in its proper place, is inserted here:]

LETTER CIV.

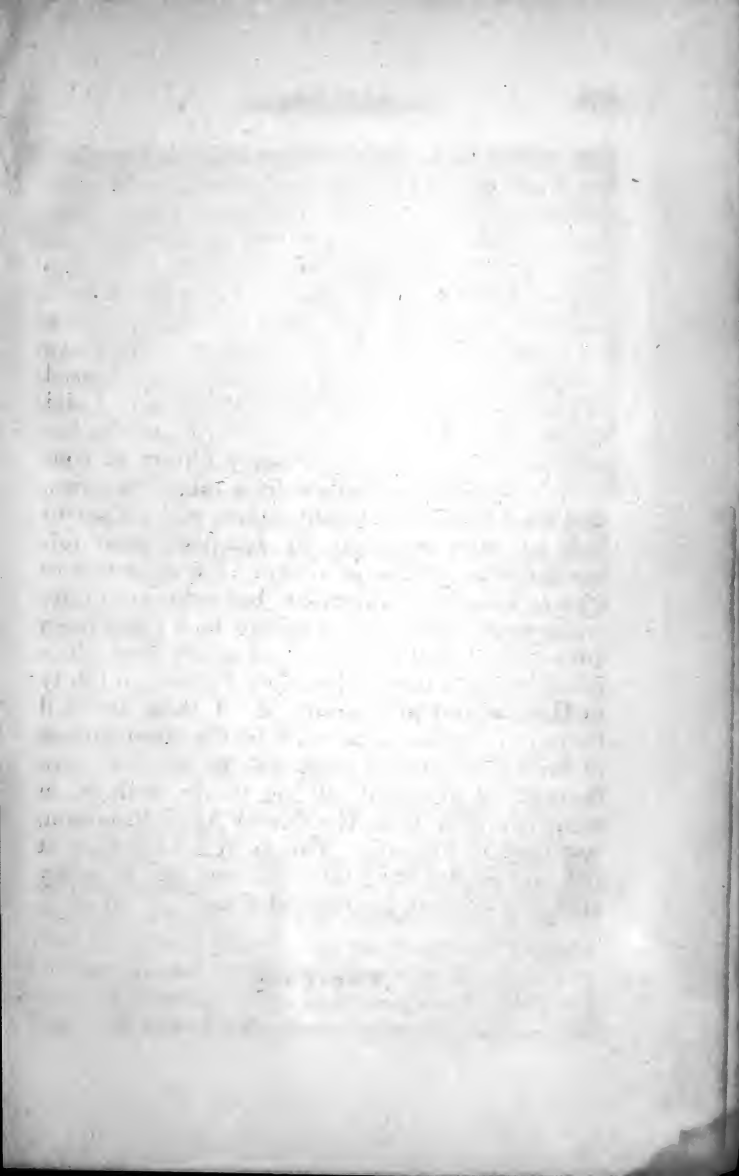
Newport, 6th mo. 18, 1824.

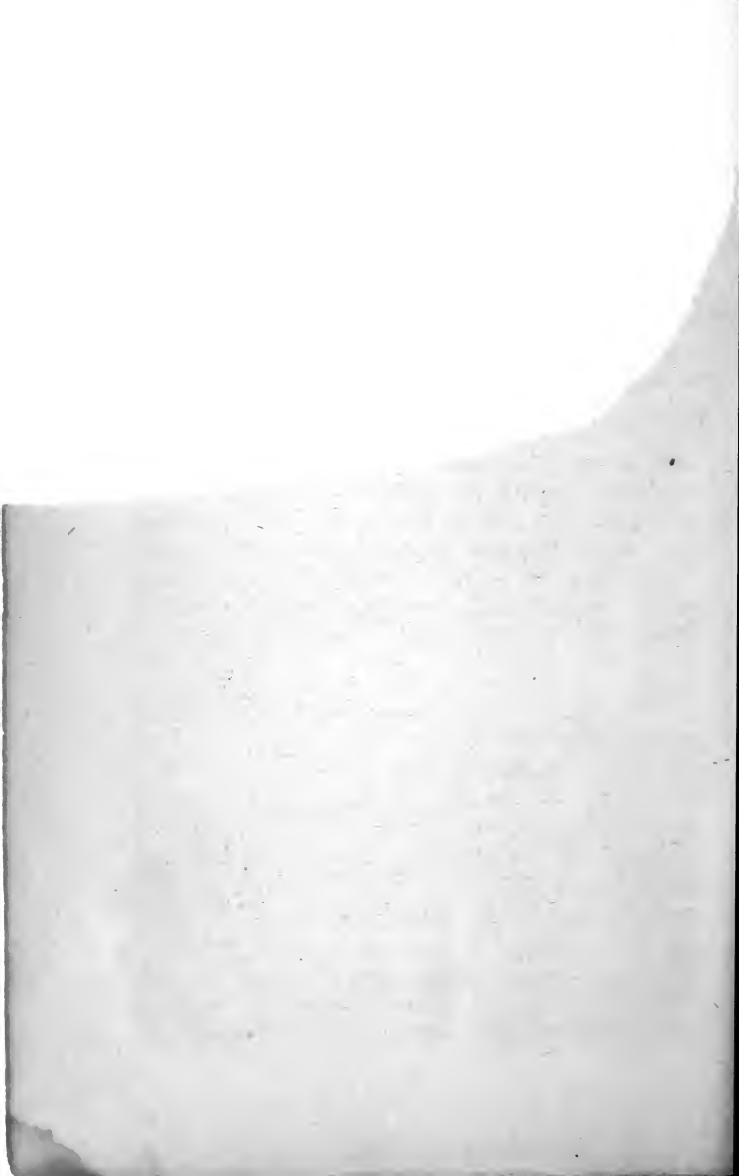
DEAR BROTHER :

It was very grateful to me, as well as my friends, to receive thine of the 15th instant, last evening; for, as thou hast observed, it is those who meet and dwell with us in true Christian fellowship, that constitute the real brother and sister in Christ. And it having been declared that, "Where I am, there must my servant be

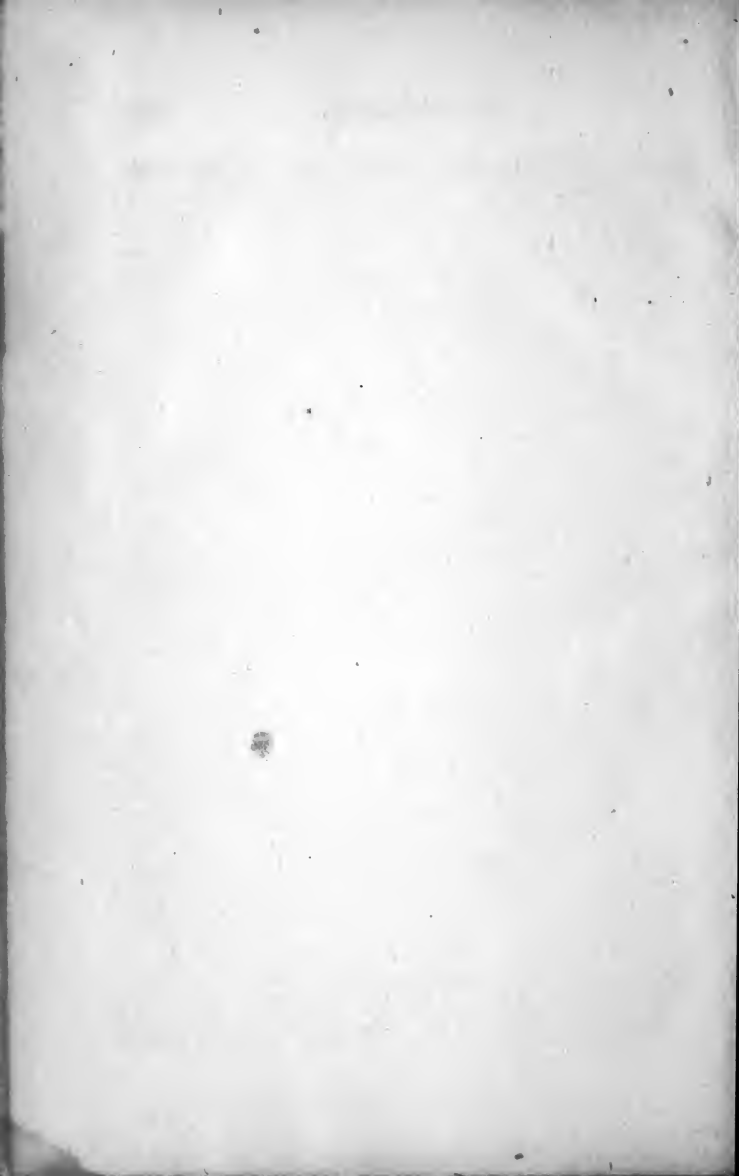
also"—if we can feel that we are where he is, that is, if we have that quietness of mind that will stand amid all the fluctuating scenes around us, all is well. I have not time to give thee a full account of what has transpired. The Yearly-meeting concluded late last evening. I have had close testimonies to bear here, for which I have been repeatedly rebuked by persons who have called upon me at my lodgings, with the proposal that I would sit among them in silence. I did not say much to them; only reverted to the beginning, when, in order to enjoy liberty of conscience, Friends withdrew from other Societies, and now there was a disposition with some to balk our own testimony, by depriving their fellow-members of this privilege. I was content to stay at home that afternoon, but went next day, and opened my mind by telling how I had been admonished, and that I would gladly have complied, but love to my Heavenly Father, and duty to Him, would not permit it. I then directed them to consider what must be the consequence of such conduct, and what was the moving cause thereof. I attended all the future sittings, in company with Eliza Rotch and Anna Robinson, two faithful Friends. The archers have shot at me, the arrows have fallen around me on every side, but not one has wounded me. M. S.

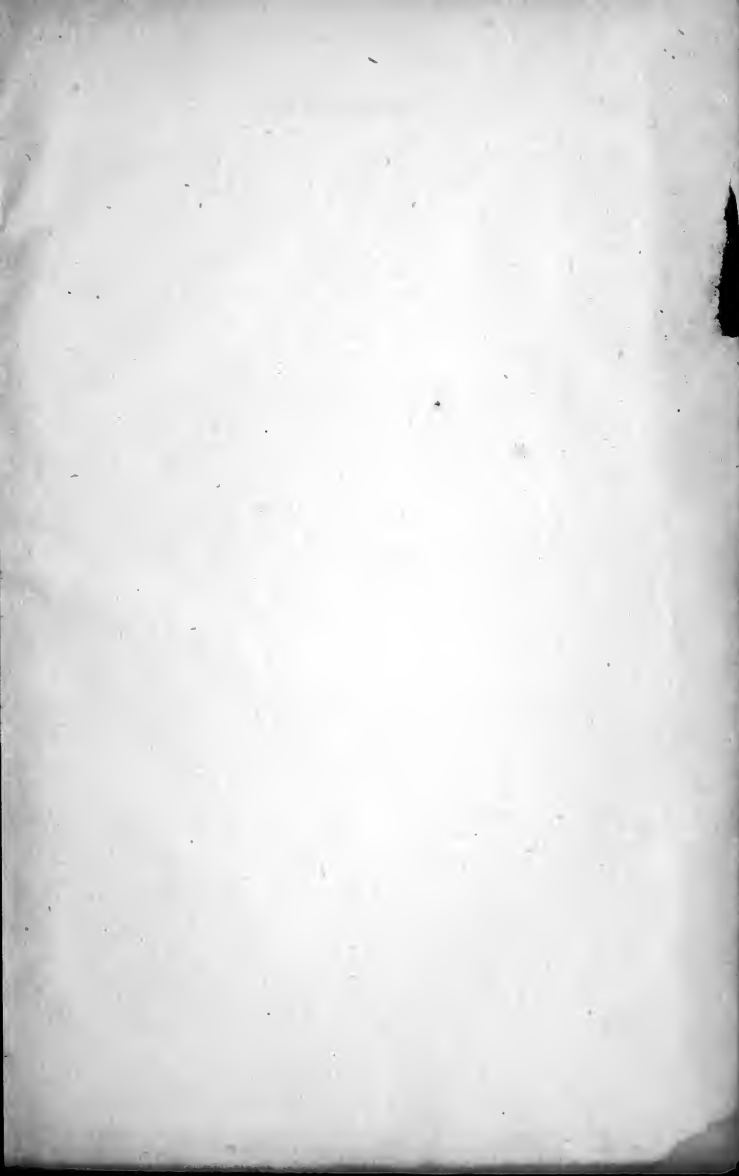
THE END.













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